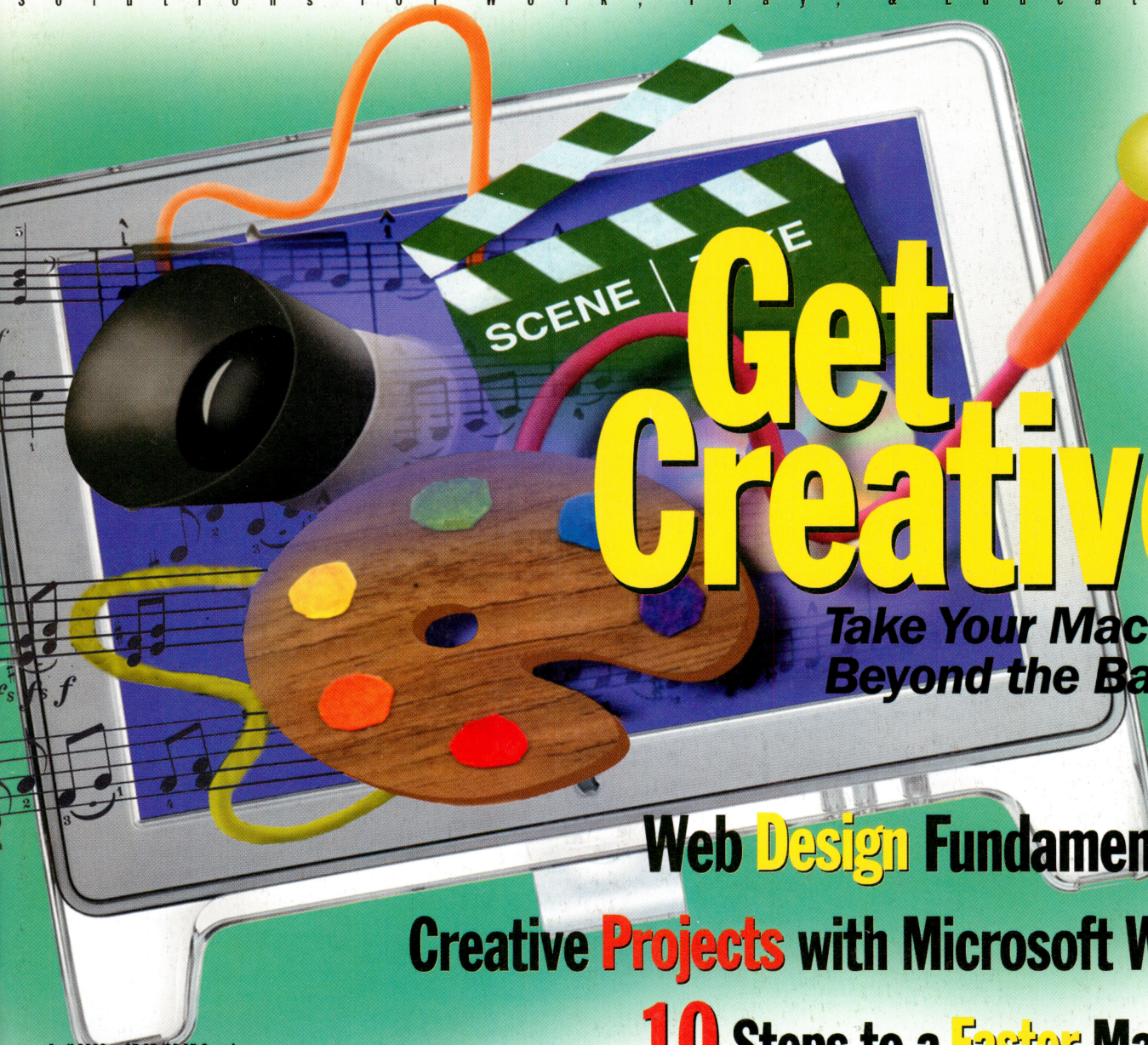


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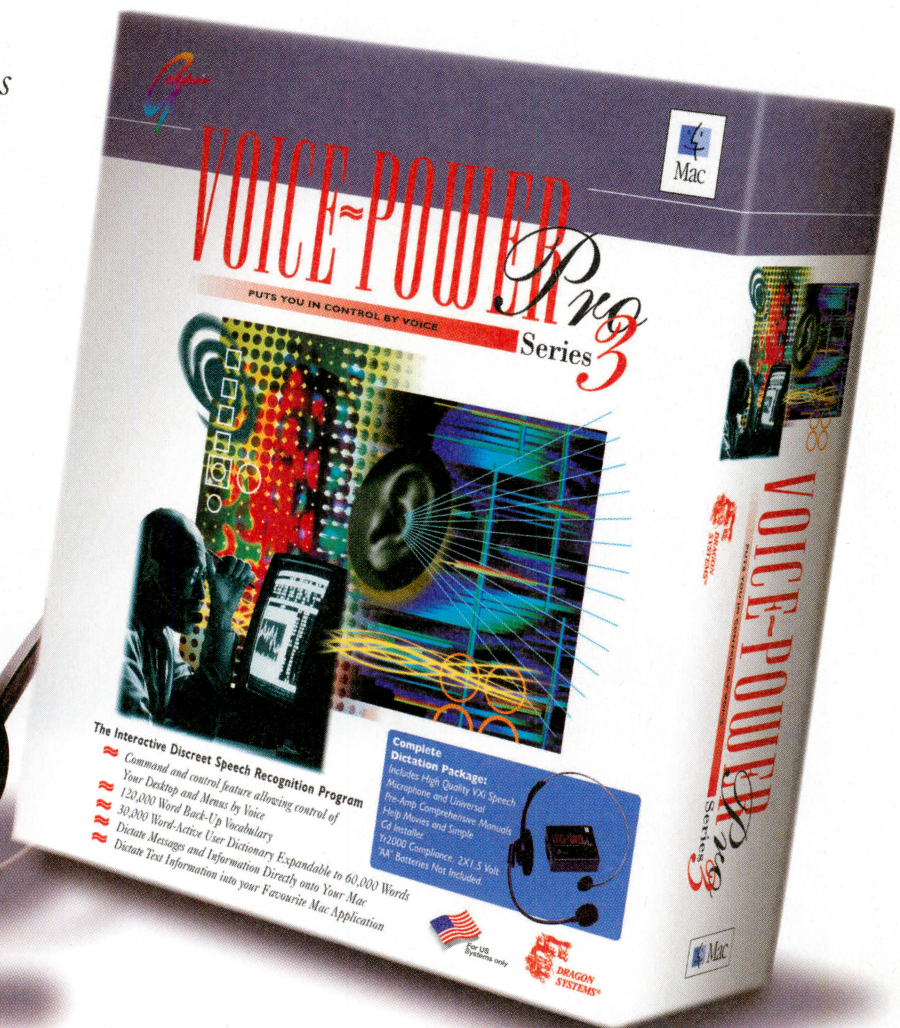




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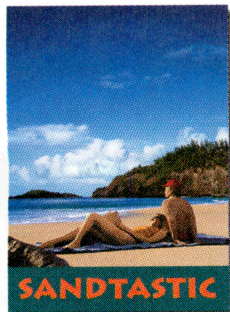




YOU'VE GOT TO SEE IT IN

**EPSON**

COLOR.



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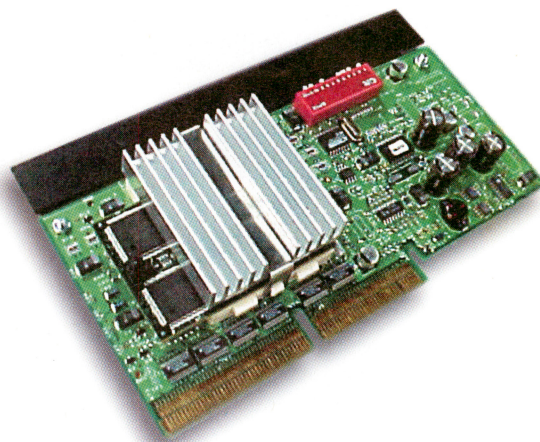
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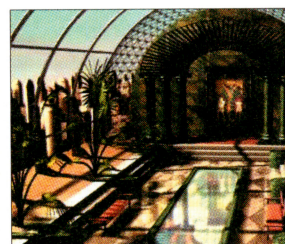
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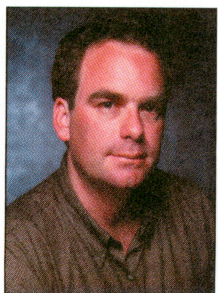
- Mac-nificent.** You gotta get it. No flaws.
- Excellent.** Recommended even if it has a minor flaw or two.
- Average.** Despite problems, still a worthwhile product.
- Below Average.** Has serious flaws that limit its usefulness or fun.
- Poor.** Avoid this product at all costs.



Indicates iMac/G3 compatibility



# from the chief [Editorial]



## We Have A Winner

**N**ever won anything in your life? Well, this story will make you feel even worse. Astute readers will recall that way back in November we dangled an iBook as a potential prize for taking part in our online games contest. And that's exactly what happened to Mr. Richard Gwynne of Dallas. He took the time to play *our silly little game*, and now look. He has an iBook and you don't. Here's our conversation:

MHJ: Hi, is this Richard?

RG: (somewhat skeptically) Yes...

MHJ: This is MacHome Journal calling to let you know you're our iBook winner.

RG: Whaaaaa?

MHJ: Remember, you filled out an online form for our games contest?

RG: Oh yeaaaaah....I won? I WON? Holy Cow! (to a 3rd party) Hey, guess what? Remember that online form thing I filled out a while back, where you name the game characters? I won the iBook! Whooooo!

MHJ: How does it make you feel?

RG: It's hard to describe, I'm ecstatic. It lets me know that there really is integrity in the world of sweepstakes. I thought maybe you were a friend of mine playing a joke.

MHJ: No tricks here, friend. Though we were tempted to choose ourselves as winners, that would have impacted our hard-won credibility.

RG: Wow. I can't believe this.

MHJ: What's the first Web page you're gonna look at? MacHome.com?

RG: Hmmmm. I think probably some ski resort, or maybe Southwest Airlines to book a vacation. MacHome second I think.

MHJ: Good answer, buddy. What do you plan to use the iBook for?

RG: Writing. I'm working on a novel, a biography of a missionary.

MHJ: Outstanding sir. Any words of advice for the many contestants who failed to win?

RG: Keep trying. And in the immortal words of The Simpsons Nelson, "Haaa haaa."

Congratulations Richard. An embarrassment of riches is yours. Stick with us and we'll do you right. And to everyone who didn't participate in the contest, especially the guy who sent in a postcard that he *really wanted* it but couldn't do the contest because he didn't have Web access, but he *would* if we gave him the iBook, so he can do the contest *next time*, but it apparently didn't occur to him that he could have gone to the *library* to log on and do the contest, we simply say "You snooze, you lose."

In other news, you may notice a change to our back page starting this month. Andy Ihnatko is missing! But don't fret — he'll be back. We're rotating the back page among several contributors now for a broader view of life's rich pageant. Salut!

John Poultney, Editor

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For change of address, subscription inquiries, back issues, and service problems, call 800-800-6542 Monday to Friday, 7:30 A.M. to 10:30 P.M. central time; or write to MacHOME JOURNAL Subscriptions, P.O. Box 469, Mt. Morris, IL 61054; or e-mail us at mhjr@mf.kable.com. Basic subscription rates: One year (12 issues plus 6 CD-ROMs) U.S., \$34.95; Canada, \$44.95; foreign, \$54.95 (U.S. funds only). MacHOME JOURNAL may rent its mailing list.

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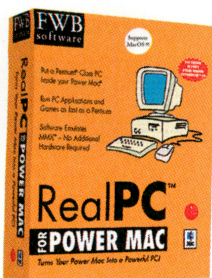
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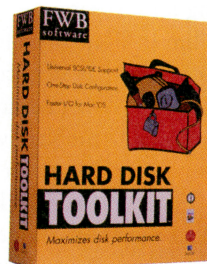
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# Write On

[Your Letters]

## Awful Friendly

I take issue with your February 2000 review of Simply Postage. It's definitely the best game in town, but the software and the company are far from perfect.

If you are printing postage for multiple packages or envelopes of different weights, each label kicks you back to the selection screen. If you are printing with a different date, this causes you to go through screens 1, 2, and 3 for each item. I would not call this friendly.

*Phyllis Evans*

## Jammed in the Flim Flam

The article on the DSL, ISDN, and so forth, was just what I was looking for. I got jammed in the 56K modem flim flam. There ought to be a law against modem scams. Thanks!

*J Geary*

## UPS Yes

I enjoyed your article about the UPS (Uninterrupted Power Supply). Probably, many readers were unfamiliar with these units. Boy, I'm not! Here in Arizona, we have more lightning strikes/power surges than just about anywhere else in the U.S. I have separate UPS/surge protectors (made by APC). One protects my trusty old Performa 575, an answering machine, and a Zip drive, and the other watches over my new iMac/modem, printer, scanner, and Zip drive. Each UPS gives me approx. 10 minutes to save data and shut down. They've saved me (and my computers) many times over the past few years. I recently bought a third unit for my wife's new computerized Serger sewing machine (which cost more than both my computers!). I'd never operate sensitive electronic equipment without a UPS.

*John Weismiller*

## The Chair

I'm 71, long-retired, and have brain damage. Everything I do comes out pretty strange. Last January I upgraded from an Apple II to an iMac. What a struggle that was. I was reading email one day and drummed my fingers on the keyboard and the thing started reading my email out loud. Scared me out of my wits. During the year after I bought it, I learned to run it by making all the dumb mistakes over and over again. While I did this, my wrists got sorer and sorer until I had to do something. (I'm not a craftsman. Once I cut off a whole set of curtain rods and managed to get them exactly a foot too short.) The problem with my wrists was that my computer table was too high for my chair. I'd bought the chair because it had great wide arm rests. Before that I had the habit of resting my arms on the rests of my chair with my bones straddling the edge. That got sore, too. So anyway, the chair was too low for the desk and the likelihood that I could cut off the legs the same length was nil. So I had to make the chair higher. I checked all around town for high coasters but none would go high enough, so I put Campbell soup cans on each leg with medicine bottle caps inside to prop the legs up. I used the caps because they're all the same thickness, and because I'm sickly I had lots of them. I got the front legs just right and then decided the back legs should be an inch lower for comfort. Then I filled each soup can with concrete which I got at a crafts shop. After it dried, I tried the chair and it wouldn't slide to and from my desk without scuffing up the tile floor of my apartment. At a local department store I



bought four sets of pyrex individual pie dishes. I set each leg in a dish and poured in concrete there too.

It came out great. So

I used the chair for a day or two and the slope of the chair gave my back fits. I decided to add some height to the rear legs to put it level, but how to get the rear pie dishes off was a problem. I finally put each of them in a pot of boiling water and when they got good and hot and expanded, I tapped each lightly around the rim with a small hammer, and they came off. A few more medicine bottle caps in the pie dishes and the rear height was right, so I poured in the remainder of the concrete. The height was perfect. But the dishes scrubbed and grumbled and marked up my floor, so I consulted the apartment house maintenance man. He gave me some carpet scraps and glue and I glued a square on each leg. I gave them 24 hours to dry but when I slid the chair into place for the first time, one of the pads was still wet and slipped off. I had to back the chair up a bit and when I did I put my foot down in the glue, which I didn't notice. Some hours later I tried to get up and discovered my foot was glued to the floor. It's lucky I was wearing socks or I'd have stayed there and starved. **MU**

*Sandy Munoz/J Geary*

write us!

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# newsWire

[News & Products]  
By Jackie Dove

## Printing in Stylus

**E**pson has emerged with a new series of low-cost USB printers targeted toward home users and small offices: The **Stylus Photo 870**, **Stylus Photo 875DC**, and the **Stylus Photo 1270**.

All three inkjet printers feature a maximum resolution of 1,440 x 720 dpi (dots per inch). A standard 4in. x 6in. photo prints in 48 seconds, and an 8in. x 10in. photo prints in under two minutes on all three models, and all feature six-color photo inks with a separate true black ink cartridge. The Stylus Photo 870, for \$299, lets you print on a variety of paper sizes including letter, legal, and panoramic sizes up to 8.5in. x 44in. A starter kit includes a roll paper holder, sample roll of glossy photo paper, Adobe PhotoDeluxe, and more.

The Stylus Photo 875DC, for \$399, is designed with digital camera users in mind. Because the printer has a built-in PCMCIA digital film reader, it can print directly from any storage card including CompactFlash I and II, CompactFlash USB, SmartMedia I and II, and Sony Memory Stick. The appropriate adapters are needed, however. A starter kit includes a CompactFlash Type II adapter, a roll paper holder, roll paper sample, Adobe PhotoDeluxe, and more.

For the professional photographer, Epson has also introduced the Stylus Photo 1270 for \$499. This model gives you a wider 13-inch carriage, thus offering a greater selection of print sizes. The print speeds cited for the previous two models apply to the Stylus Photo 1270 in Fine mode. It also includes Adobe Photoshop 5.0 LE.

Epson, 800-463-7766, [www.epson.com/printer](http://www.epson.com/printer)



## Manage Yo' Assets

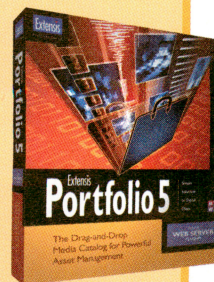
**S**ay you're one of those creative professionals who's constantly pumping out new stuff. The problem is that pretty soon you've got everything scattered around your hard drive or in obscurely named folders, and you don't know where anything is anymore.

Portfolio 5, for \$200, can help manage your digital assets so you can catalog, share, repurpose, and distribute your photographs, logos, illustrations, Web pages, or multimedia files. It works well for workgroups too.

You can create custom fields to organize your entire library, and arrange your assets by subject, theme, date, or any category you choose. You can also customize views and display any combination of details.

The product, which will be available in April, includes PortWeb, a free Portfolio Web server plug-in, so you and your workgroup can publish your files to the Web.

Extensis, 800-796-9798,  
[www.extensis.com](http://www.extensis.com)



## Font Freaks Unite!

**O**ur friends at P22 Type Foundry never let us down. They've now come out with two new releases, **Stanyan** and **Woodcut**. Stanyan is designed to

produce readable text at small sizes, and can function as a decorative display font at larger sizes, with regular and bold versions for \$20. Woodcut features the look of letters carved out of Expressionist-style woodcuts, and is also \$20.

P22 Type Foundry, 800-722-5080, [www.p22.com](http://www.p22.com)



## If You're So Inclined

**A**nother reasonably-priced Photoshop plug-in filter has hit the landscape: **Xhatch 1.5** from Inklination. This plug-in produces pen-and-ink effects, letting you create elegant and traditional art and illustrations for your print or Web images. The new version, which costs \$25, has 30 built-in effects and five new apply modes. You can also design custom effects within the program.

Inklination, 604-608-2649,  
[www.inklination.com](http://www.inklination.com)



## Look! More Shooters!

**J**ust when you thought you were ready to decide exactly which digital camera to buy, along comes Olympus with a suite of new offerings that just may propel you into a snit of indecision. We never said it would be easy.

Starting with the lowest price, there is the new **D-360L** that, for \$299, gives you a 1.3 megapixel CCD (for 1,280 x 960 resolution). This model also features a choice of exposures and film speeds, spot metering, auto white balance, two compression ratios, and SmartMedia capability of up to 64MB. The video out feature lets you use this camera without a computer for easy viewing of your pictures on a TV screen. However, you can also download images to your USB computer or print directly to an Olympus P-330 or the new P-330N printer via your SmartMedia card.

The **D-460 ZOOM** is a 1.3 megapixel camera with a 3X optical zoom lens for \$499. This model gives you improved menus and function buttons, new Lithium batteries, and a wider choice of compression modes. The protective lens barrier slides open with one hand, which both turns on the camera and extends the zoom lens. You get six image-quality levels, five-mode flash with red-eye reduction, force-fill flash, automatic low-light and back-light mode, and more.

On the higher end, Olympus has introduced the **C-3030 ZOOM**, a USB model featuring a 3.34 megapixel CCD, a 3X zoom 32-96mm equivalent all glass lens with a continuous 2.5x digital telephoto. It will be available for \$999 in May.

A new QuickTime Movie mode gives you 191 seconds of video at 160 x 120 resolution at 15 fps (frames per second), or 46 seconds at 320 x 240 resolution at 15 fps. The camera has a built-in microphone so you can record sound during your video shoot. Shutter speeds range from 1/20 second to 1/10,000 second.

Okay, now you just want to print. No problem. Olympus has introduced the **P-330N Photo Printer** for \$449, which lets you print at 306 dpi resolution with 16.7 million colors. It can print high resolution JPEG files up to 10MB and uncompressed TIFFs up to 20MB, and also reads SmartMedia cards.

*Olympus, 800-347-4027, [www.olympus.com/digital](http://www.olympus.com/digital)*



## Why Didn't We Think of That?

**D**id you ever wish you could see a better view of your digital images while they were still in the camera instead of having to first download them into your computer? Now you can.

Hagiwara Sys-Com has come out with the **Lukis JPEG ImageViewer**, a miniature monitor that displays images stored on your camera's SmartMedia card. The LCD (Liquid Crystal Display) screen is a 4-inch color TFT LCD measuring 220 x 160 pixels for \$279, equipped with a dedicated SmartMedia slot. Simply load the card into the viewer to see whether you want to keep the image. You can play back a single frame, thumbnails, or a slide show.

*Hagiwara Sys-Com, 858-546-9989, [www.hscus.com](http://www.hscus.com)*

## Sketch it Out

**I**f you're working with complex sketches or architectural drawings, and you need to share them on the Web, Microspot has come out with **MacDraft 4.4**, for \$229, an upgrade to its 2D design and drafting package. It features basic and advanced drawing tools, a multi-layered and scaled drawing environment, even an integrated database.

*Microspot, 800-622-7568, [www.microspot.com](http://www.microspot.com)*

## Those Old Floppies!

**F**or those who've been computing for a long time, and threw a minor fit when the new Macs started

shipping without the standard 3.5-inch floppy drives, there's a new disk drive that can read your old 1.44MB floppies as well as its own high capacity 144MB cartridges. Caleb Technology has introduced the **it drive**, which can also function as your boot drive. The it, for \$130, comes in both external and internal models. The latter fits a standard 3.5-inch internal drive bay.

*Caleb Technology, 303-786-9600, [www.calebstor.com](http://www.calebstor.com)*

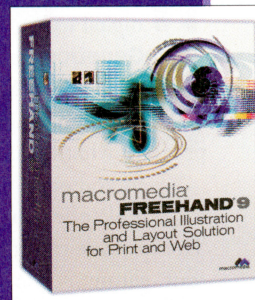
## FreeHand 9 Arrives

**C**alling all artists and Web designers! Macromedia has introduced a major upgrade to its venerable vector drawing program with the announcement of **FreeHand 9**, scheduled to hit the street in March for \$399. The new version, designed for print and Web designers, streamlines production while tightly integrating the drawing program with the company's suite of Web development tools, particularly Flash.

For illustrators, FreeHand 9 offers a new Perspective Grid, magic wand tracing, and editable vector transparencies.

The program gives you multi-page management capabilities and faster, more accurate autotrace. The new version lets you produce better Flash files, allows you to animate for Flash, and also lets you output HTML files with embedded Flash files.

*Macromedia, 800-470-7211, [www.macromedia.com](http://www.macromedia.com)*





## Sweet Scanner

**A** new and versatile scanner is on the horizon for April. Microtek has introduced the **ScanMaker X12USL**, featuring both a USB and SCSI interface for new and older Macs. The legal-size scan bed (which holds 8.5 in. x 14 in. documents) lets you scan legal documents conveniently, and is especially suited for OCR and text editing.

This scanner also features 42-bit color, 14-bit grayscale, and an optical resolution of 1,200 x 2,400 dpi. It comes bundled with ScanWizard 5 software, which is customized both for beginners and advanced users. ScanMaker X12USL handles 35mm slides, filmstrips, and 8in. x 10in. transparencies with the transparency adapter, which is included. You also get Adobe PhotoDeluxe and Optical Character Recognition software for text. The price was not available as of press time.

Microtek Lab, 800-654-4160, [www.microtekusa.com](http://www.microtekusa.com)

## If U Can Hear This...

**T**hen you must have a Java-enabled browser. Yes, really. Have you ever wanted to place streaming audio on your Website, but felt like it was too much hassle, and too few people had specialized programs and plug-ins to hear your content? You might consider using a Java-based tool such as clipstream from Destiny Media Technologies, a program that lets you produce streaming audio for listeners who don't have special players or plug-ins. How? It works via a small Java applet.

**Clipstream**, a \$99 download from the Web, actually produces the code and detects user connection speed to provide quality sound to anyone equipped with a Java-enabled browser.

No programming muscle is required to use clipstream. Just choose your audio clip, drag and drop it into the compressor, then cut and paste the code that it generates

into your HTML document, and send it to the server. You pay \$99 for use of the product per Website. Sure beats programming!

Destiny Media Technologies, 604-609-7736, [www.clipstream.com](http://www.clipstream.com)

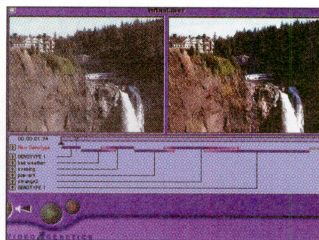


## See Here!

**W**hile there are a number of utilities on the market that will assist you in enhancing your digital still images, Q-Research has launched **VideoGenetics**, an analogous product to enhance your digital video. An easy-to-use interface lets you make complex image adjustments without any technical knowledge: Simply tell the program what looks best, and it does the job of converting your images.

When you open the program, you see two displays of your video side by side. One is a sample of the original video, the other is a variation generated by the program. The software can manipulate characteristics such as hue, gradient, color balance, contrast, gamma, color temperature, color shift, and saturation. Through April 3rd, you can download the program for \$199 from the company's Website. Thereafter the price will go up to \$249.

Q-Research, 425-888-6609, [www.q-res.com](http://www.q-res.com)



## Macs Rule Windows

**W**e know you are loathe to, uh, cross the platform to the Windows side of the world.

But what if you absolutely have to trade files, conduct chats, or remote-control that poor unfortunate's computer?

If that is your assignment, then have a look at Netopia's new update of its remote access software, **Timbuktu Pro 2000**. This new version lets you directly dial via any modem to any Windows machine with the new version installed, to establish a connection, perform remote control, chat, converse over the Internet, intercom, and transfer files.

It's also perfect for mobile workers, telecommuters, and Internet users who need to connect and communicate with others across the Net, over direct telephone lines, and across platforms.

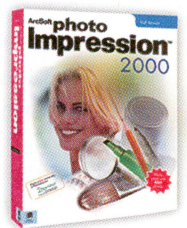
Prices range from \$50 to \$80 for license quantities of between 2 and 30. Netopia, 800-485-5741, [www.netopia.com](http://www.netopia.com)

## Be a Photo Pro (or Act Just Like One)

**J**ust because you're new to digital imaging, it doesn't mean you can't give your pictures a professional touch with **PhotoImpression 2000**. This \$40 program from ArcSoft will be available this quarter. The software lets you retouch, add special effects, work in layers, and more.

PhotoImpression comes with frames, borders, and shapes. Use it to create greeting cards and calendars. Then, upload your images to the company's photo-sharing Website.

PhotoIsland.com ([www.photoisland.com](http://www.photoisland.com))  
ArcSoft, 800-762-8657,  
[www.arcsoft.com](http://www.arcsoft.com)





## All In One

If you're creating multimedia presentations, and need a tool for image editing, assembling multimedia files, and creating slideshows, binuscan's **Watch & Smile 2.0.5** may be just the ticket. An icon-based interface lets you acquire images from any source, retouch, and create distortions and special effects. The program lets you assemble images as well as music and voice audio, which you can either import or record directly with Watch & Smile.

This upgrade, available in March for \$90, features improved interface, editing functions, advanced airbrush photo-retouching tools, improved text management, sound management, and more.

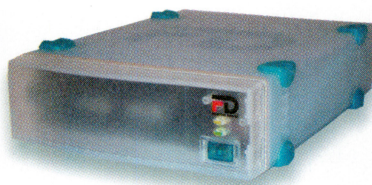
Once your presentation is complete, you can export it as a QuickTime movie or save it as a Watch & Smile document to share on the Web.

binuscan, 212-681-0600, [www.watchandsmile.com](http://www.watchandsmile.com)



## Drives, She Said

You want storage? You want it now? Phantom Drives has got it for you with **15GB, 25GB, and 34GB FireWire** drives priced at \$399, \$519, and \$645



respectively. Designed as an external storage device for your iMac DV, or Power Mac G3 or G4, it's especially well-suited for those working with multimedia, digital audio and video, and graphic design. But wait! There's more. Phantom Drives also announced two new **FireWire CD-RWs** — a 6 x 4 x 24 and an 8 x 4 x 32 for \$529 and \$649.

OnStream has unveiled its external SCSI Echo 30GB drive running Dantz Retrospect Desktop

Backup software. The drive, for \$699, has a transfer rate of up to 2MB per second. The 30GB removable cartridges are \$40 each or three for \$100.

Fantom, 310-474-1685, [www.fantomdrives.com](http://www.fantomdrives.com)

OnStream, 800-759-4621, [www.onstream.com](http://www.onstream.com)



## A Faster iMac

Now you can get faster speeds on your older iMac — the ones that shipped with 233MHz, 266MHz, and 333MHz processors — with Newer Technology's iMac upgrade cards.

The company has introduced the **iMAXpowr G3 466**, a 466MHz G3 with 1MB backside cache running on a 155MHz cache bus (that means very, very fast). It costs \$499 after the rebate. While you don't need any drivers or other software, this installation should not be done by the faint of heart.

But you'd better make that upgrade snappy and be prepared to mail Newer your old processor card in return (at their expense). The \$200 rebate (the card regularly costs \$699) drops to \$150 if they receive your old card more than five days after you receive your new one. Whew!

Newer Technology, 316-943-0222, [www.newertech.com](http://www.newertech.com)

## Ergo Mouse

When it comes to mice, well, emotions tend to run high. A new arrival on the scene is the USB **Contour Perfit Mouse**, a three-button mouse that comes in graphite or blue. The mouse costs \$100 and ships with its own software for applica-



tion-specific settings. The mouse comes in five right-hand sizes and three left-hand sizes to give you a perfect fit for your paw.

It's all very ergonomic because its "open hand architecture" gives you elevated buttons as well as support for the hand, wrist, and thumb. Using this mouse, your hand can be open, balanced, and relaxed rather than curved around the mouse.

Contour Design,  
800-462-6678,  
[www.contourdesign.com](http://www.contourdesign.com)

## Behold the Scanning Type

If you travel a lot with an iBook as your companion, and you need to scan, have a look at the **MiniDoc Macintosh** from Avigramm Technologies.

This small portable scanner, for \$129, is tailor-made for your iBook. It has an optical resolution of 300 x 600 dpi (dots per inch) with a maximum resolution of 9600 x 9600 dpi, and a USB connection.

It comes with rechargeable battery, image processing, and OCR software. Avigramm Technologies, 408-473-9200, [www.avigramm.com.tw](http://www.avigramm.com.tw)





## Go Wide.

**Introducing the new HP DeskJet 1220C printer designed for the Mac.**

If your work demands a wider range of capabilities, the Mac-compatible HP DeskJet 1220C delivers the big picture — up to 13" x 19" including 11" x 17" full bleed — right out of the box. It features HP's enhanced Color Layering Technology for true-to-the-original printouts and an alternative 2400 x 1200-dpi mode using photo paper. With speeds up to





## Go Wild!

**Big, brilliant color printouts up to 13" x 19".**

11 ppm for black and 9.5 ppm for text and graphics, you can go as wild as you want and still print faster than you ever thought possible. Stop by your HP retailer today. Discover how wide great printing can be. **True to the Original.**

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\*Estimated U.S. retail price





# Hands-On Projects

By Helen Bradley

**You might not know it, but you can do quite a lot with modern word-processing applications like Microsoft's Word 98.** Quite a lot other than just processing words, that is. That's so ... predictable! Fire up your Mac and join in as we present to you three simple yet compelling projects: an announcement card, a calendar, and a very important tool for anyone seeking his or her first job — a résumé. These step-by-step projects use Word 98, but you should be able to duplicate the concepts in most word processing packages.

## Announcement card

In this project you'll learn the following:

- **How to create a card on a small sheet of paper**
- **How to insert and size an image**
- **How to add WordArt to a project**
- **How to place text in a text box**
- **How to place text over a picture**

### Hear this!

Are you moving home or business premises? Are you having a new baby? This simple announcement card will tell everyone the news! The card folds so you can mail it without needing a separate envelope, and the design is simple enough to adapt to any occasion. If you don't have a color printer, use colored paper for the best results.

### What you'll need

These announcement cards work well on paper that is half the size of standard letter paper. Before cutting your paper, complete the first step of the project to see if your printer driver will allow you to create a document this size in Word. If yes, then cut the sheets yourself



using a paper trimmer, which you can buy for a few dollars at a stationer or craft store. Alternately, take a bundle of letter paper to your local print shop and have them slice it in half.

If your printer won't handle this paper size, print your announcement at a larger size on normal letter paper. Whatever the size you use, for best effect, print on the heaviest paper your printer can handle.

If you like, you can attach your business card (with your new address) to your announcement. To do this, you will need glue which remains tacky when it dries — this allows the card to be removed unharmed without tearing the announcement. You'll find this glue at most stationery or craft shops. You'll also need sticky tape or stickers to seal the fold.

## Instructions

**Step 1** Begin with a new document by clicking the New button on the standard toolbar. To set up the paper size choose File, then Page Setup. How you set the correct paper size will depend on what printer you're using. If it doesn't have an option for 5.5 x 8.5 in paper (which is unlikely), yet it has an option for setting a custom paper size, such as a Custom button, choose this and set the paper width to 5.5 in and height to 8.5 in. Click OK. Set the orientation to Portrait and click OK.

If you can't set your printer to this size, then print your announcement on letter paper. Choose File, Page Setup, and then Letter paper and Portrait orientation.

**Step 2** Set your margins by choosing Format, Document, Margins tab. Set the Top, Bottom, Left and Right margins to .5 in, and the From edge Header and Footer settings to 0 in, then click OK. If an error message appears warning that the margins are outside the printable area of the page, choose Fix.

**Step 3** Add an image to the document by choosing Insert, Picture. Choose Clip Art if the image is stored in this collec-

tion, locate the image, and choose Insert. If the image is stored in a file, choose From File, locate the file, select it, and click Insert. Use the sizing handles to adjust the size of the image if necessary, then drag it into position on the page. Depending on the image you've selected, you may want to experiment with different positions and sizes

### step 4 ▼



to get the best result.

If the image won't move into position, select it and choose Format, Picture, Position tab, and check the "Float over text" box. From the Wrapping tab set Wrapping Style to None, then click OK.

**Step 4** Now you're ready to add text to your document to announce your news. You will find that WordArt works well for the overall heading and, for the detailed information, use text in a text box.

To add WordArt choose Insert, Picture, then WordArt. Choose a WordArt style and click OK. Type your heading text into the text area, choose a font and font size from the drop-down menus at the top of the dialog box, then click OK. Drag the WordArt into position and resize it if necessary.

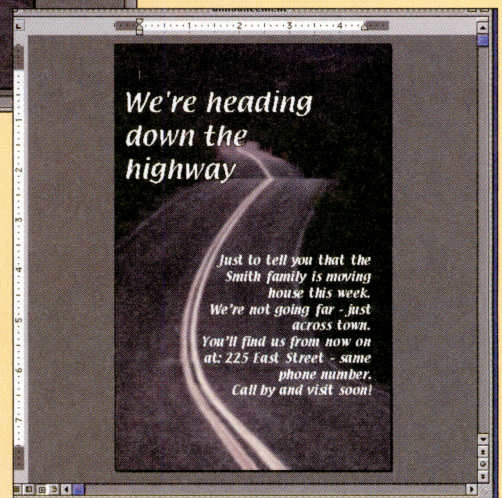
**Step 5** For the main text, choose Insert, Text Box. Click-and-drag the pointer to create the text box into which

you will place the details of your announcement. Click inside the text box and type your text. Highlight the completed text and choose Format, Font, and Font tab, with an appropriate font and font size.

If you are placing text over a photo as we did in the sample, you may find the text looks best formatted to white or another color that contrasts with the photo. To set the text color to white, select it and choose Format, Font, and Font tab. From the Color drop-down list choose White, and click OK.

**Step 6** Finally you'll want to remove the border from the text box to make it transparent so that you can see the image

### step 6 ▼



underneath. To do this, select it and choose Format, Text Box, Colors, and Lines tab. Set Line Color to No Line from the drop-down palette, and set Fill Color to No Fill, then click OK.

**Step 7** Save and print your card and then trim any unwanted white border from the page. Fold each announcement card in half (or, if you've used Letter paper, fold it in thirds) and seal it with a sticker or tape.

**Write the address on the outside of the card and it's ready to mail.**



In this project you'll learn the following:

- How to use a table to organize information
- How to place a table in a text box

## Before you begin

Before beginning your résumé carefully select an image to use. Choose one that is relevant to the job for which you're applying. Any type of image will be fine, from a simple black-and-white line drawing to a photograph.

**Step 1** Select the New button on the toolbar. From the File menu choose Page Setup and set the orientation to Landscape (so the page is wider than it is tall), and click OK. To view the entire page on screen, choose View, Zoom, Whole Page, then click OK.

**Step 2** Add a text box which will contain the text of your resume. Choose Insert, Text Box, then click-and-drag a text box that fills a little more than the right-hand side of the page. Placing a table in the text box ensures it can be positioned anywhere on the page without difficulty,

Your headings might include: Phone Number, Date of Birth, Driver's License Number, Education, Interests, References, Job History and Personal Statement.

**Step 5** To narrow the width of the left-hand column, place your cursor in the table but make sure you don't have anything selected. Move your mouse pointer over the line between the two columns until it becomes a double-headed arrow, then hold your mouse button as you drag the arrow to the left to narrow the first column. You'll want your headings to fit comfortably in the left column, leaving a larger column for your information on the right.

**Step 6** Move to the first cell in the right column, choose a plain font, such as Arial, and type your address in the cell. Continue down the cells in the right column entering the details to match the headings in the left column.

**Step 7** To remove the table's borders, place your cursor inside the table and choose Format, Borders and Shading, Borders tab. Under Setting choose None and from the "Apply to" drop-down list at the bottom-right of the dialog box, choose Table and click OK.

**Step 8** To remove the border from the text box select it and click Format, Text Box, Colors and Lines tab. From the Line Color drop-down menu choose No Line and click OK.

**Step 9** To add your image to the page click anywhere outside the text box with the table in it. If you're using clip art choose Insert, Picture, Clip Art, select your image, and click Insert. If the image is in a

file or on CD-ROM, choose Insert, Picture, From File, locate the image, and click Insert. Adjust the size of your image to fill the space on the left of the page — you will find that an image which is taller than wider will work best.

**Step 10** **Save and print your résumé.**

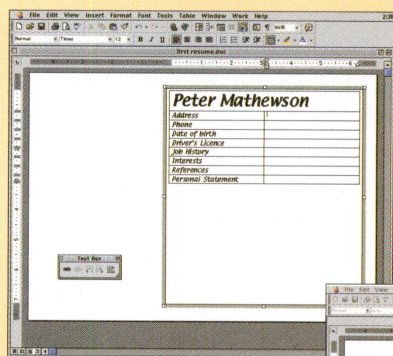
## Instructions

and that you can place a picture next to it.

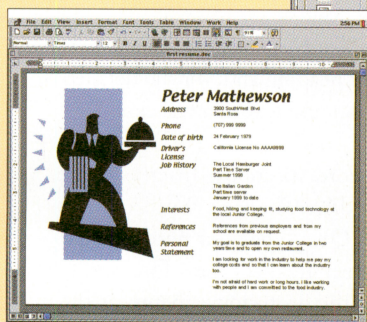
To place a table inside the text box, click inside it, then choose Table, Insert Table. Set the Number of columns to 2 and the Number of rows to 2, and click OK.

**Step 3** Select the two cells in the top row of the table and choose Table, Merge Cells. The top row will now be a single, wide cell. Type your name in this cell using an attractive font, and size it to fit on one line. You'll use the same font for the headings in the rest of your resume, but at a smaller font size.

**Step 4** To enter your first heading, place your cursor in the bottom-left cell type "Address" then press Tab twice to add a new row to your table. Repeat this to add all the headings you need for your resume. Don't press tab once you have typed the last heading.



step 5 ▲



step 9 ▲



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# Subscribe

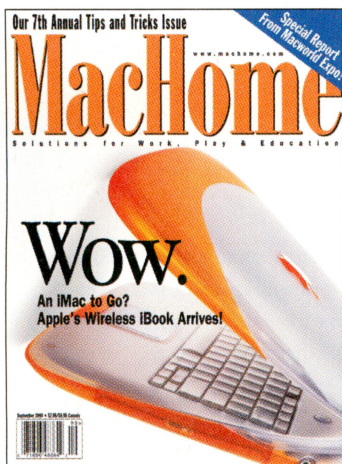
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# Customized calendar

In this project you'll learn the following:

- How to use a Wizard
- How to customize a Word document

## A timely gift

A calendar makes a great gift any time of the year — not just in January, which is when most people expect to receive one. When I create a calendar for a friend who has a birthday in May, I make one that begins in May and runs for 13 months.

Because this calendar includes personal photos, it will truly delight the recipient. You might even be tempted to print an extra one to keep for yourself!

Selecting photographs to use

All the images you'll use for this calendar need to be the same size. If you choose to make a portrait calendar, the photos need to be about twice as wide as they are tall, and if you choose to create a landscape calendar, they must be twice as tall as they are wide. Choose your graphics carefully before you begin and, if necessary, open the photos in a graphics program and crop them so that they are approximately the right size before you begin.

Use pictures of family members, pets, friends, holiday locations, favorite buildings, and places. If you're creating a gift for a friend who lives overseas, include pictures of your town and of famous landmarks.

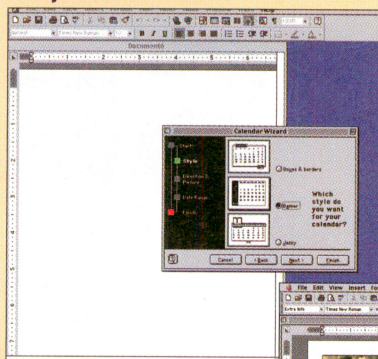
## Instructions

### Step 1

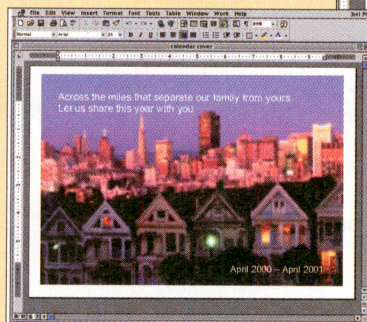
Choose File, New, Other Documents tab, choose the Calendar Wizard and click OK. From the Start position in the Calendar Wizard click Next. From the Style options which appear, choose Banner, then click Next. From the Direction & Picture options select Landscape, or Portrait, according to your preference. Click Yes to ensure the Wizard leaves space for your photos, and then click Next. The Date Range allows you to choose the months and years to start and finish your calendar. Select these and click Finish.

**Step 2** To customize your calendar, replace the image Word has provided with your own images. To do this, click the existing image and select Insert, Picture, From File. Locate your chosen image, select it and click Insert.

### step 1 ▼



### step 2 ►



### step 3 ▲



If you prefer to use clip art, select the existing image, then from the Insert menu choose Picture, Clip Art, choose an image, and click Insert.

Use your mouse to adjust the size of the image so it fills the space available and, if necessary, use the Crop tool on the Picture toolbar to crop the image.

**Step 3** Repeat step 2 for every page of your calendar.

**Step 4** Save your calendar and print each page.

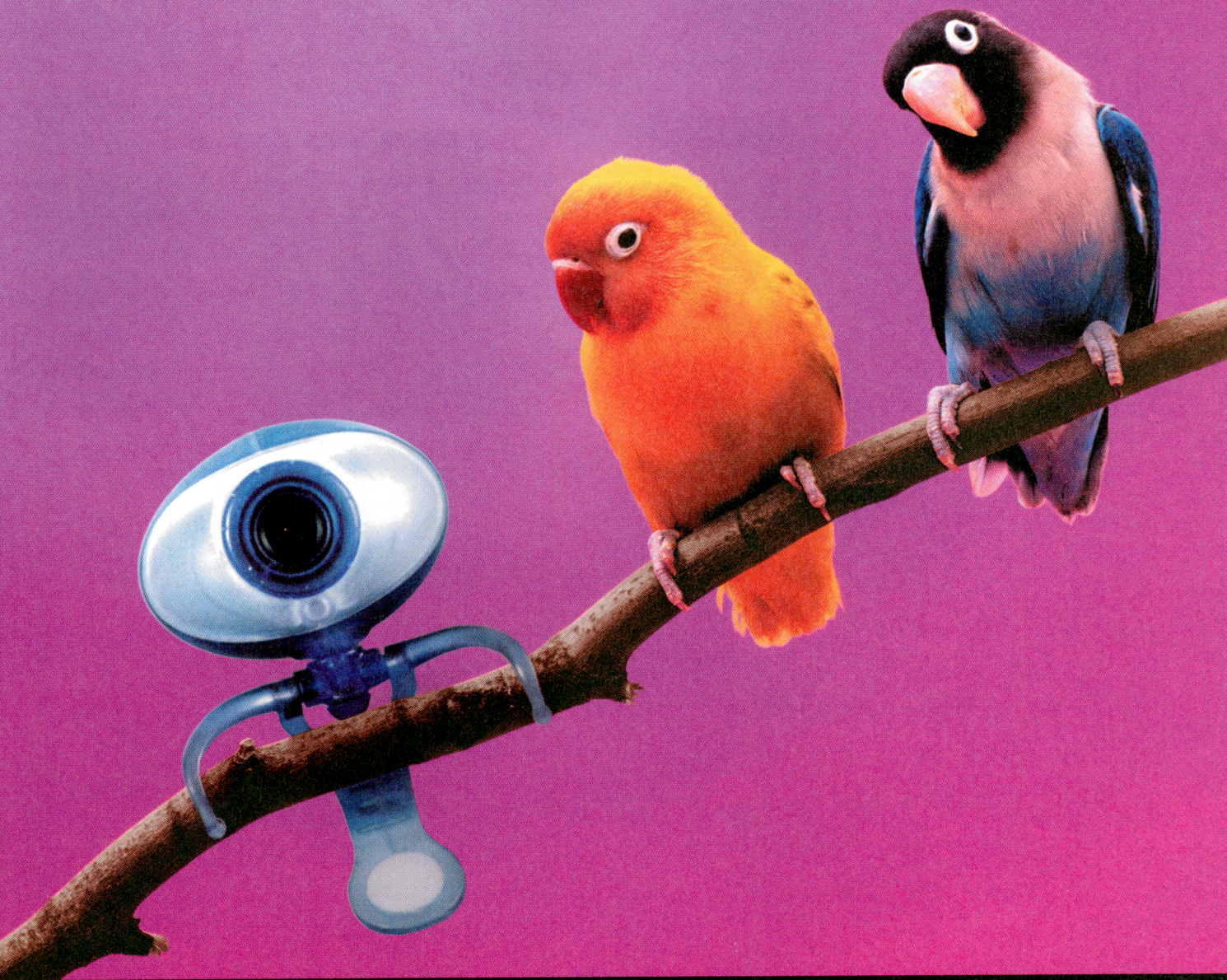
**Step 5** Create a new document to use for a cover page for the calendar. A photograph can look great, especially if you place text over it, such as "Jane's Year" or "The Wilson Family's Christmas."

**Step 6** To complete your calendar, gather up all the pages and bind them along the top edge. Spiral binding is best, as it ensures each page sits flat when it is opened. (You'll find most print shops offer binding for just a few dollars.) Laminate the cover page if you'd like to give your calendar extra stability.

To hang the calendar from a hook, punch a hole through the center of the pages at the top. **If you want to present it as a gift, loop a small piece of ribbon through this hole for the desired effect.**

*Helen Bradley specializes in writing hands-on tutorials. Her columns appear regularly in a number of publications in the USA, Canada, Australia and the UK. She can be contacted at [helen@helenbradley.com](mailto:helen@helenbradley.com)*





# see things differently.



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Closes up / Sets up on flat surfaces / Optional wand and base assembly

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**IREZ**  
Looking beyond the beyond...



# We Do

By Alex Handy

# Windows

## How to Play Nice with PCs

**Windows is ... challenging.** There is no getting around it. **While it's a heck of a lot better than DOS, the old command line interface for PCs, it's still an obtuse and unfriendly place to do your work.**

Yet the world still remains in the death-grasp of Windows, and with Windows 2000 just around the corner, you can be sure that this scourge of computer cognoscenti isn't going away anytime soon. **So what's a hapless Mac owner to do?** What happens if you, warm in your blanket of Mac-using bliss, have to deal with that horror of horrors: a Windows file?

There are a number of ways to deal with those ornery Windows files. The first, and probably simplest way is to assimilate them. Your Mac comes with a whole bunch of software to help you coexist peacefully with PCs. The heart of this software is the File Exchange control panel. Here you can tell your Mac how to deal with all those bizarre files that come from PC land. Choose how your Mac deals with foreign files in the File Exchange control panel.

First let's get a little background info on what exactly we're going to be doing. One major difference between Mac and PC files is how they describe their creators. Each file on your computer has a specific type. This type is described by a four-letter symbol, like a stock has its own symbol on the NASDAQ (You don't always see these descriptors on the Mac; they're often behind the scene). On PCs, however, these types are only three letters long. While Windows can now handle longer type names, for the most part, your run-of-the-mill PC files will have a three-letter type. Furthermore, these

types are generally appended onto the back of the file name, and are commonly known as *file extensions*. Weasel.doc, for example. This may look familiar: You've probably received many an email attachment from PC friends that comes with ".exe" at the end of it —this particular type is an application, so you can't do anything with it on your Mac. Yet.

So in the File Exchange control panel, you can set what applications you want to open what types of files you want. Let's say your buddy sends you a strange file via email titled *ilikefudge.wp6*. When you double click this file, a dialog box will come up asking you what program you'd like to open the file with. The first thing we must do is figure out what the heck your buddy sent us. Most likely, it's a file full of text, so we should be able to open it with Simple Text.

Unfortunately Simple Text can't open documents larger than 32k. Even if we could open it in Simple Text, it would probably come out all funky and weird-looking since Simple Text is notoriously bad at han-



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dling formatted text (that is, recognizing spaces, page breaks, indentation, etc.). So our next best bet is to try opening the file in Microsoft Word or Appleworks. Either of these word processors can handle most generally used text files, and display them without screwing up the formatting.

Now that we've found a program that can handle the text document your buddy sent you, we know that ".wp6" is the file type used by some strange other-worldly word processor. New knowledge in hand, we can head to the File Exchange control panel and teach our Mac how to handle these files in the future. Open the File Exchange control panel and you'll see a long list of types and programs. Click the Add... button. Now we've got a text box and a list of all the applications on your computer. Type ".wp6" in the text box and then scroll down the list of applications until you come to your word processor. Select it and hit the Add button. Voila! Next time your buddy sends you a file from his crazy moon-man word processor, simply double-click it and it will be opened up in your word processor of choice.

This technique will work with any PC file you can find, so long as it's not an application (.exe). You can open pictures, movies, sound files, and anything else the PC folks can throw at you, by using the File Exchange control panel. To save time, drag the mystery file onto the application you expect will open it: if you think it's a movie, drag it onto Quicktime player, if you think it's a picture, drag it onto Photoshop.

## You Will be Assimilated

But what if your PC friends want you to play some new game online with them, or need you to screw around with a PC-only program, like Lotus Notes? Then, you must emulate. Emulation is the practice of using software to impersonate hardware — in this case using the Mac's processor to act like an Intel chip so it can run Windows. There are currently two major programs out there that will let you run Windows on your Mac: Connectix Virtual PC (from \$50 to about \$170, depending on which PC-operating system is included; [\[nectix.com\]\(http://nectix.com\)\) and FWB's SoftWindows \(about \\$160 with Windows 98; \[www.fwb.com\]\(http://www.fwb.com\)\). Virtual PC is probably the most effective and powerful way to emulate a PC, but it requires a lot of horsepower-](http://www.con-</a></p>
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er to run at a useable speed.

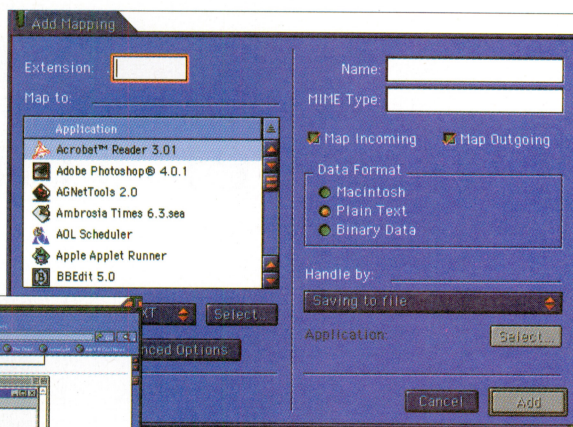
SoftWindows is a better choice for owners of older Macs, as it's a bit easier on the old engine. But if you've got a G3, we recommend Virtual PC.

Virtual PC is a true emulator. It entirely mimics the PC hardware that runs Windows, and therefore allows you to run Windows on your Mac without the poor Microsoft operating system ever knowing it's being duped. There is nothing that a real PC can do that a Mac running Virtual PC can't. You can even use PC peripherals if you've got a USB port handy. Surf the Web and check your email in Virtual PC, a plus if you're receiving a lot of strange PC files and applications through email.

It's not an emulator, but MacLink Plus (\$99 from DataViz; [www.dataviz.com](http://www.dataviz.com)) is a godsend for Mac-PC relations. This package automates much of the procedures needed to read PC files on a Mac, or to create files on your Mac such that PC users can read them.

## Floppy Dilemmas

And what if you need to read some PC disks? What if that ugly PC in the corner needs a file that's on a Mac disk? Fear not, your Mac is armed and ready to take on all comers. It's easy to read a PC disk, just pop it in your floppy or Zip



drive. Your Mac handles the rest.

Reading a Mac disk on a PC, however, is another matter. Most PCs won't take too kindly to Mac floppies, so it's up to us Mac users to accommodate the Windows world. If you've got data on a floppy that needs to go to a PC, first put the floppy into your Mac. Copy all the files off of the disk and go to the Special menu and select Erase Disk. A dialog box will come up asking you what kind of disk you want to make the floppy. It should default to Mac OS Standard Partition. If you click on this, you should get a couple of other choices: Mac OS Extended Partition, DOS 1.4, and ProDOS 1.4. Select ProDOS 1.4, although Regular old DOS 1.4 will work too. Hit OK and wait for the disk to finish formatting. When it's done, copy your files back onto the disk. Your PC can now read the floppy.

## Peace Be With You

The Windows world is a scary place for a Mac user. Yet the two can get along quite well, even in a Windows network. In fact, your Mac should be perfectly happy among the Windows machines; the network upon which they run can in almost any case support Macs in addition to PCs with just a few tweaks. If you've still got some more questions, or if you're brave enough to try and tackle the problem of networking Macs and PCs, check out the excellent Mac-Windows page, at [www.macwindows.com](http://www.macwindows.com). It's chock full of wholesome info on living with the best of both worlds. And when you're using Windows, try not to get too flabbergasted. Windows users get depressed easily. **NUT**



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# Grand Designs

Simple Tricks for Beautiful Sites

If you've spent any time on the Web you've probably seen it all: Websites that are slow, confusing, meaningless, impossible to read, or just plain hideous. Even if you have no design background, you can avoid that fate for you own site.

Whether you are designing a Website for your business, a tribute to your favorite person or pastime, or a personal site for family and friends, remember that a good Website is a powerful communications tool. Give your viewers an enriched experience, new information, or entertainment, and present it with simplicity, elegance, and speed. It's not that hard. Honest!

Here are a few questions you'll want to ponder before you start your design:

- **What is the concept of the Website?**
- **Who is the intended audience?**
- **What elements (text, images, audio, video, animations) will be included?**
- **What value does it have for the visitor?**

The answers to these questions will help you determine the visual design (such as the color scheme, navigation, and images), writing style, and level of interactivity.

## Who Needs It?

A Website must have a reason for being. So before you even crack open the shrink wrap of a new Web authoring tool (more about that later), or try your hand at HTML coding, you'll want to figure out the purpose of your site and how you want to deliver your message electronically.

Then decide who you are targeting: children or adults, men or women, a particular age group, the family, a specific topic of interest, a résumé and portfolio for prospective employers?

Completing this process will help you conceptualize the experience of your viewer. A statement of purpose on the home page (literally the front door to your site) should indicate what the Website is about and what viewers will find on its pages. If you cannot clearly articulate your site's objective, then reconsider your decision to build it.



## The Flow of Ideas

With Websites, organization is critical. You can't post a jumble of individual Web pages without knowing how they relate to and integrate with each other. First, develop a structural vision of what your site will contain, and sketch it out.

You can do this with flow charting software, such as Inspiration 6, or you can use index cards, stickie notes, or a scratch pad and pencil. However you choose to do it, this structure will determine how your site is organized and how your pages are linked to each other.

You generally want no more than a half dozen major categories or sections that link directly from your home page. You can have many more sub-categories or pages linked to those main categories. Arranging pages in this sort of hierarchy prevents you from overwhelming the viewer with too many choices at once.

The Web, including your site, is a work in progress, and as time passes, new elements should be added. Plan for the future by making sure there is space for new features. When you add new features to your site, mark them with text or a small image to announce their arrival. That will guide viewers to the most recent items.

## Design for All

Just because you have a Power Mac G4, a 20-inch monitor that can display millions of colors, and access the Web via your cable modem, doesn't mean everyone else does.

Think of the Web as a vast level playing field where old (sometimes *really* old), semi-new, and new computer systems must all peacefully co-exist. That means your Website should be legible and make sense on all platforms (Mac, Windows, even Unix).

Many viewers with older computer systems have monitors with a 640 x 480 resolution (14-inch diagonal width with 640 pixels across and 480 down), displaying 256 colors. Some really old computers do not support graphical browsers such as Netscape or Internet Explorer, so the text and organization of your site assume even greater importance.

Moreover, an increasing number of vision-impaired viewers are accessing the Web through speech-synthesized screen reader software or Braille displays, so take into account when preparing things like tables and backgrounds, that they may be hard to interpret. Consider

giving your viewers a text alternative to complex layouts and multimedia.

Designing for all viewers does not mean your Website must look plain and dorky. Far from it. Most browsers — even older ones — support JavaScript, GIF animations, and forms, so these interactive elements can be used with most monitor resolutions and color palettes. Use these elements in moderation, and only when they significantly contribute to your content and design.

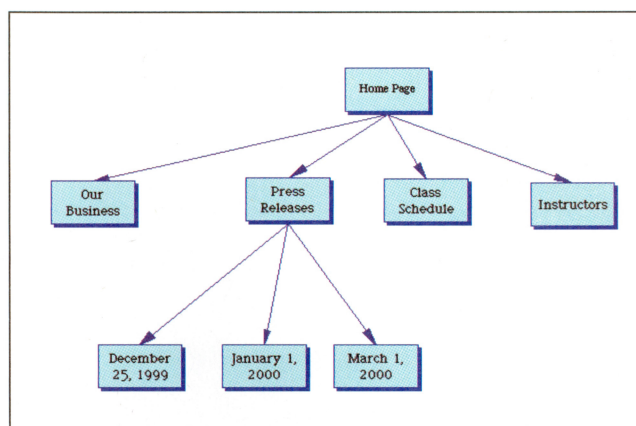
## Graphical Suite

Websites are full of visual cues. A distinctive logo or illustration that functions as a Website ID should appear on every page to tell viewers where they are. Consistent use of fonts and colors serves the same purpose. Loud colors and clashing background images are hard on the eyes, and can camouflage your good content by making it hard to read.

All images must have an "Alt" tag (that's the HTML source code inside the image tag that gives your graphic a text name) so those surfing with either their images turned off, or a non-graphical browser, will know what the images are.

Good Website graphics are small and fast, meaning file sizes are small so graphics download quickly. Viewers are notoriously impatient, and nothing turns them away faster than a slow-loading page. If you plan to place multiple images on a page, remember that each image file takes time to download and will slow down the loading of your page.

The smaller the dimension of an



A simple flow chart helps define the linking scheme of your Website and shows you how each page relates to all other pages.

image, and the smaller its file size through compression, the less time it takes to download. A fast graphic is one that is properly sized and makes the best use of image compression methods.

The most popular compressed file formats for online graphics are GIFs (short for Graphics Interchange Format) and JPEGs (short for Joint Photographic Experts Group). The former are most often used for graphical images and illustrations that contain large blocks of color, while the latter are used for photographs and continuous tone images. GIFs can hold only 256 colors or less per image without losing information.

JPEGs, on the other hand, do lose information when compressing images, but can hold millions of colors.



## Icons anyone?

Everyone loves icons, those pretty little pictures that dress up Websites. The problem is that no one knows, without being specifically told, what 95% of them mean. If you use an icon-based navigation scheme on your site, be sure to include text links as well.

Avoid having your pages read "Under Construction." Yes, they are everywhere, but remember how *you* felt the last time you waited for a page that had no content. Because Web pages are constantly under construction, placing a link that does not exist is unnecessary. Finish your pages before you post links to them.

## Browser-Safe

The use of Website color is one of the trickier parts of design, and one in which



## What Good Websites Have

- Consistent navigation or toolbar on all pages
- Consistent graphic design across pages
- A distinctive logo or illustration
- Consistent use of fonts and color
- Pages that stand on their own
- A mission statement
- Good organization
- Contact information on all pages
- The date each page was updated
- A New icon or a word that marks new features
- Small, fast graphics
- Design for a universal audience
- Room to expand
- Short, cogent blocks of text
- Well-written, short links
- Judicious use of multimedia

the designer must relinquish a certain degree of control. Remember the television store where 25 TV sets are tuned to the same channel and they all look different? It's the same with computer monitors. Everyone who views your Website will see something different than you see on your screen. The browser-safe palette, while still imperfect, can help unify the colors of your background, text, links, and graphic images so that they appear the same or as similar as possible to most of your viewers.

How is this done? For a low-end monitor that can display only 256 colors, the Netscape and Internet Explorer browser palette for both operating systems has 216 of those 256 colors in common. This is the browser-safe palette. That means 216 colors will

on each page lets visitors find their way around your site easily.

Do not rely on the browser's Back button to navigate. If you want to get fancy, no problem. Use a JavaScript or Java rollover on your navigation bar to enhance the interactivity of your site, or add sounds or other effects. But be sure to keep your images small and include text links.

Institute the three-click rule. Viewers

## What Good Websites Don't Have

- Blinking animations or text
- Features that only work in one browser
- Scrolling tickers and marquees
- Overly promotional, hyperbolic writing
- Under Construction icons
- Inoperable links

less than optimal. Animated GIFs and JavaScript, while almost universal, also take up bandwidth, and can malfunction.

### Inter-Active

The hyperlinked environment of the Web is inherently

interactive because hypertext links let your visitors control where they go, what they see, and the order in which they see it.

The most basic mode of interactivity is an email link. Forums, chat, guestbooks, and video conferencing are other, more complex forms of interactivity.

Interactivity can also mean feedback in the form of a browser response to an action, such as the popular JavaScript rollover. With JavaScript rollovers, when users roll

their mouse over an image, it changes, or they hear a sound. Keep in mind that older browsers may not support all these forms of interactivity.

Forms are also popular, especially with businesses using them to communicate with customers and to order merchandise. Setting up a working form is a bit complex, as it requires a CGI (Common Gateway Interface) script that communicates with your server. You can opt to have form data sent to your email address, but this trick works only with version 4.0 browsers and above.

### Write on

Reading from a computer monitor is the equivalent of staring into a light bulb, and research indicates that people dislike reading too much on screen.



A cryptic, icon-based navigation scheme without text (above) is useless. Adding text links (below) makes this navigation bar both attractive and useful to viewers.

(theoretically) look the same no matter what browser and operating system you view them on. The browser-safe palette helps avoid ugly dithering, a distortion that occurs when a 256-color monitor tries to display colors it does not have.

### Navigation, Navigation, Navigation

A well-designed Website takes the burden off the viewer by providing a consistent, easy-to-follow, navigation scheme — use either an icon-based toolbar with text links or simple text navigation. A navigation bar

should not have to click more than three times to find the information they are looking for on your site. Each page should have a clear objective and stand on its own, as it often is the only page your visitor will see.

### Multimedia

While online audio and video are very cool, they take up valuable bandwidth that can slow the download of your Website to a crawl, or even crash a viewer's operating system. If you use video or audio, consider linking to it from another page and warn the viewer of how long it will take to download at various modem speeds. Always give readers a



Thus, viewers rarely read Web copy word-for-word, but rather scan pages for meaningful words and sentences. Average reading speeds are 25% slower in making the transition from print to screen, thus a good rule is to write 50% less than you normally would and make use of hypertext links to compensate for the lack of depth. The best writing style for the Web is short, concise, well-researched, grammatical, and addressed to the reader in a natural voice.

Writing links is an art. Make your links short, and make sure that they work. Don't say "click here" for a link — write a descriptive label or short headline. Avoid long blocks of text in all capital letters, all italics, all bold face, text that stretches all the way across a browser window, and text that crowds against the left or right edge of the browser window.

The most considerate way to treat a long block of text is to make it "printer friendly" by putting it on a plain white background page so viewers can print it.

Finally, spell check your pages. Nothing loses credibility faster than a poorly written, ungrammatical page that's full of spelling errors.

### Testing 1-2-3

Test your Website in as many different places as possible. Get your friends to help. Test on as many browser versions of Netscape, Internet Explorer, and AOL as you can. Test on older Macs and newer Macs. Test on the Windows and Unix (if you can) platforms. Expect to see disparate results in text size, image rendering, colors, and layout.

### Learning HTML

So how do you actually build your Website? It depends. If you don't want to learn HTML (or even if you do want to, but don't want to code your entire site by hand), you can invest in a Web authoring program.

Business packages such as Symantec Visual Page and Adobe PageMill are designed to be easy to use for those who must create a site, but have neither the time, money, nor interest in a high-end authoring tool. Adobe GoLive 4 and Macromedia Dreamweaver 3 are high-end designer tools that are more expensive and tend to have a higher learning curve, but they give you a lot of programming flexibility.

An authoring tool that meets your needs, combined with the guidelines outlined above, should give your fabulous Website the reception it deserves. **NTI**

## Resources

**Lynda Weinman**, [www.lynda.com](http://www.lynda.com) (browser safe color palette and more)

**Adobe**, [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com) (Web design and graphic art software and tutorials)

**Macromedia**, [www.macromedia.com](http://www.macromedia.com) (Web design and graphic art software plus lots of information)

**Symantec**, [www.symantec.com](http://www.symantec.com) (Web design software)

**Bobby**, [www.cast.org/bobby](http://www.cast.org/bobby) (Website accessibility guide)



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# The Chilling Saga of a Mac Upgrade

By Jackie Dove

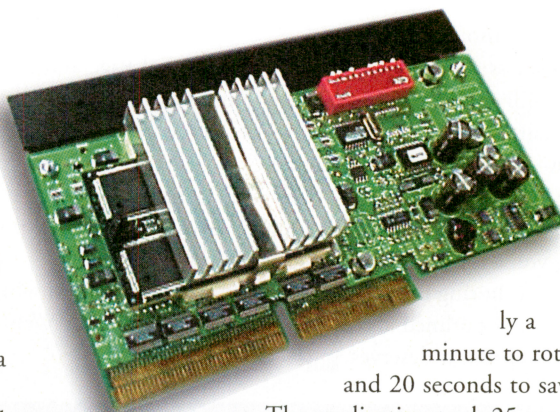
10 Simple Steps to Fearless Installation of your Upgrade Card

**O**K, I'll admit it. When it comes to cracking open my computer to install new upgrades and cards, I am a total wimp. I don't like it. It makes me nervous. What if I ruin my Mac?

But upgrading your older Power Mac to take advantage of some of the new, blazing fast upgrades, is not as intimidating as it may first appear, and the benefits are enormous. So take a deep breath as we walk down Upgrade Lane.

While there are several companies from which you can purchase upgrade cards — and you will need to research which product best suits your needs — I chose, for this example, XLR8's MACH Carrier G3 450MHz upgrade. My current Mac is a Umax Supermac clone which, before the upgrade, clocked a relatively poky 189MHz. A speed boost to 450MHz, I reasoned, would make a significant difference in my life.

In what way? Before installing the upgrade card, for example, a 16MB Photoshop image took near-



ly a minute to rotate and 20 seconds to save.

The application took 25 seconds to launch. Opening an application like QuarkXPress took 30 seconds, while saving a Quark document took at least that long. That may seem trivial, but all those wasted seconds, every hour of every day, add up serious (not to mention boring) downtime.

## The Ten Commandments

Here are the steps you'll need to take to successfully upgrade your Mac.



## 1. Read the directions. The MACH

Carrier G3 comes with an instruction manual of reasonable length. While many of us are loathe to sit down and actually read instructions, the fear of unwittingly botching an upgrade, and the thought of the time wasted in having to redo the job, inspired me toward patience.

## 2. The upgrade card comes with a

CD full of software. Make sure to install the software before you install the hardware. That automatically prepares your system for the new upgrade card. You'll need to be running OS 8 or higher to install the MACH Carrier G3. Install the software, then shut down your computer and cut the power.

## 3. Prepare your computer for the

upgrade by disconnecting all peripherals such as monitors, networking connections, and SCSI devices such as printers, scanners, external hard drives, microphones, and anything else attached to your computer.

## 4. It's best to move your computer

to a spacious table before opening up the box. It's also a good idea to work in a static-free environment such as the kitchen, where there's more likely to be a linoleum floor. Avoid carpets.

## 5. Before opening up the chassis of

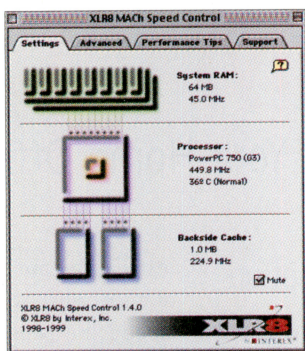
your computer (instructions for opening your computer casing are in the manual for your model) you'll want to don the handy anti-static wrist strap that comes in the XLR8 G3 upgrade box to eliminate static electricity. Don't forget to plug it in. Then open the computer casing. As an extra precaution, you can also touch the power supply of your hard drive to discharge any excess static electricity.

## 6. Handle all hardware components

gingerly and as little as possible. This is especially true of the new upgrade card. Handle it only around the edges.

## 7. Locate and remove your old

processor card from its slot. It's likely to be in there nice and tight, so you'll have to patiently rock it and pull upward to dislodge it. Then carefully set it aside.



## 8. Carefully remove

the new card from its anti-static bag and replace it in the same slot as the old card you just removed. Be sure your upgrade card fits snugly by pushing it down as far as it will go. Make sure that there are no loose pieces on the new card.

## 9. Close the chassis

and put the used card into the anti-static bag in case you need it.

## 10. Reconnect your peripherals

and fire the computer back up.

### The Outcome

If all has gone well, you will notice an immediate boost in your startup speed.

The XLR8 software automatically sets the hardware at default speeds, but it will suggest certain changes to improve performance even more.

At the XLR8 default, a Photoshop 5.5 file took a mere 18 seconds to launch, and 38 seconds to rotate, as opposed to 25 seconds and 56 seconds respectively, before the upgrade. Opening QuarkXPress took only 14 seconds instead of 30 seconds.

Because the XLR8 MACH Speed Control can be accessed through your control panels, you can customize settings to make your Mac faster and more efficient.

Since the upgrade, life is better, work flows faster, I am more productive. I think I'll go get a latte. 

### Wanna Upgrade? Try here

XLR8, 800-456-8000, [www.xlr8.com](http://www.xlr8.com)  
Sonnet Technologies, 800-786-6260, [www.sonnettech.com](http://www.sonnettech.com)  
Newer Technology, 316-943-0222, [www.newertech.com](http://www.newertech.com)  
PowerLogix, 888-769-9020, [www.powerlogix.com](http://www.powerlogix.com)



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## Networking (Literally)

### Airport to Ethernet, the Best Ways to Get Your Home Office Wired

One of the most immediate needs for those who set up a home or small office is networking: A network allows you to move files back and forth between your Macs, print from all your machines to just one printer, and avert the need for floppies, Zip disks, and other unnecessary clutter. That's what "networking" is all about — allowing your Macs to share resources.

#### The Easiest Network

By far the simplest way to connect two Macs, as long as they're in relatively close proximity — such as in the same room — is by means of a magical wire called an Ethernet Crossover cable. Such a cable, which you can pick up from your local computer store for around \$15, runs from the Ethernet port of one Mac to the Ethernet port of the other.

The Ethernet connection lets you share files between computers, run the same programs, and, if you've got more than one person in the office, play games against each other! (Not that we at *MacHome* would advocate such a frivolous use ...) Using special software, such as Vicomsoft's SurfDoubler (www.vicomsoft.com) for about \$65, both Macs can use the same Internet connection, so two people can surf the Web or send email at the same time.

#### Discovering Ethernet

If you want to connect more than two Macs, Ethernet is still a good way to go, because virtually every Mac is wired for Ethernet right out of the box. All you have to do is supply the cables. As with Ethernet Crossover cables, you can pur-

chase "regular" Ethernet cables at your local computer store.

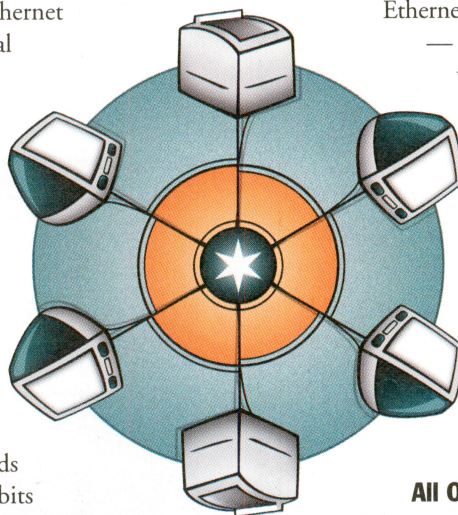
But if you do want to connect more than one Mac, you'll need an Ethernet hub (these start at around \$45). The less expensive hubs support data transfer speeds of up to 10 megabits per second (Mbps), and the pricier ones support speeds of up to 100Mbps. The first type of Ethernet is often referred to as 10BaseT, and the second is often called 100BaseT, or, appropriately enough, Fast Ethernet.

But in order to take advantage of Fast Ethernet, every computer, and every printer, has to be 100Mbps-capable; either that, or your hub must have an "auto-sensing" feature, enabling it to accommodate both speeds. Also, for these higher speeds, you need to avoid crimping the wire in any way: Such

installations are best to put in the hands of a specialist, which, of course, requires an added expense.

Filesharing over Ethernet is exactly the same as in the two-Mac scenario involving an Ethernet Crossover cable — that is, easy. The tricky part is sharing a printer. You can't easily share a USB printer — only some of them support sharing, and it works by using one machine as an Internet. It's better to use a "networkable" printer, that is to say, a printer that has

Ethernet, and these are costly — most laser printers with Ethernet capability cost more than \$700. Some inkjet printers have this capability, which usually involves an added option costing about \$300. You can use SurfDoubler for sharing a modem.



#### All Over the House

Ethernet — the 10Mbps variety, at any rate — is an extremely easy way to connect your Macs. But if you tend to migrate your computers, or if your home or small office is a bit large, you might want to look into a HomePNA network, which uses existing phone lines for connecting your Macs. So, wherever you have a phone jack, you can just plug in a computer, and bingo — it's on the network. This kind of network uses a separate frequency than telephone calls, so it allows you to talk on the phone and transfer data at the same time. HomePNA stands for



the Home Phonline Networking Alliance, an organization that creates standards with which companies can develop phonline-based networks.

One downside to such an arrangement is that, unlike Ethernet, Macs don't come out of the box all ready to hop onto a HomePNA network. iMacs and iBooks, for example, need to be endowed with special boxes that translate data into a form that can travel over a phone line. Some work through the USB port, and some use the Ethernet port. PowerBooks and minitowers need expansion cards. Also, HomePNA is relatively slow if you're using iMacs — it's rated at 1Mbps, which is considerably slower than Ethernet. However, products in development will soon increase HomePNA speeds up to 10Mbps for iMacs. There are products that will allow minitowers to achieve 10Mbps speeds right now.

HomePNA works seamlessly with Ethernet, so if you have an Ethernet printer connected via an Ethernet port, all of your other machines, as long as they are connected via HomePNA, will be able to use that printer.

HomePNA networks are also cross-platform, so you can, if you must, put a PC on the network and share a printer or even an Internet connection.

Farallon's HomePNA network is called HomeLine, and it costs about \$100 per Mac on the network. Farallon makes one kind of adapter that works with the USB port, and another that works with the Mac's Ethernet port. The Ethernet adapter is usually better, since it doesn't involve any software installations, but if you don't have a free Ethernet port, the USB version will certainly suffice.

Farallon also sells cards, for around \$79, which you can install in any Mac that accepts PCI cards. All these are rated at 1Mbps, but Farallon representatives say 10Mbps versions are in the works. Farallon bundles SurfDoubler with its products, making it easy to get started with sharing a modem.

Diamond Multimedia also offers a HomePNA network, called HomeFree. HomeFree USB adapters, which provide iMacs with 1Mbps access to a

HomePNA network, cost \$70. As with the Farallon HomePNA gear, you can also purchase cards for towers. These cost \$40 each for a 1Mbps network, and \$130 for zippy 10Mbps access.

Diamond Multimedia plans to release a 10Mbps version of the iMac device by this summer.

### AirPort

Another way to go — particularly if you're using iBooks — is AirPort, Apple's wireless network, which we reviewed in February. For filesharing, you need to install an AirPort card (\$99) in each iMac. Once you have them up and running, each card will be able to access the other's files. A \$299 AirPort Base Station contains an Ethernet port with which to connect a printer or an existing wire-bound Ethernet network, as well as a 56K modem, with which you can dial out to the Internet. Any Mac on the AirPort network can get Internet access. However, performance dramatically suffers when more than two people are surfing at the same time.

AirPort is rated at 11Mbps, putting it just a hair above the 10Mbps variety of Ethernet. AirPort has excellent range — it would work fine all around a large home or office.

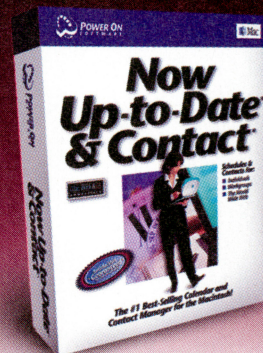
AirPort is great for Macs that are spread far apart (saving you installation fees for rigging Ethernet jacks), and certainly tidier than Ethernet because it eliminates dangling wires.

### Network Power

If you're unsure about what kind of network is best for you, start with a "loose" Ethernet, that is, connecting two Macs with a Crossover cable, or three or more with a hub and Ethernet cable. This is by far the cheapest way to get started. If you want to get fancy later, install Ethernet jacks, or go wireless with AirPort. HomePNA is also a good solution, since you don't have to install any jacks and it's easier to integrate PCs, should you have a few of them sitting around.

No matter which kind of network you choose, your Macs will be much more powerful when they work together. **III**

# Prioritize & Synchronize.



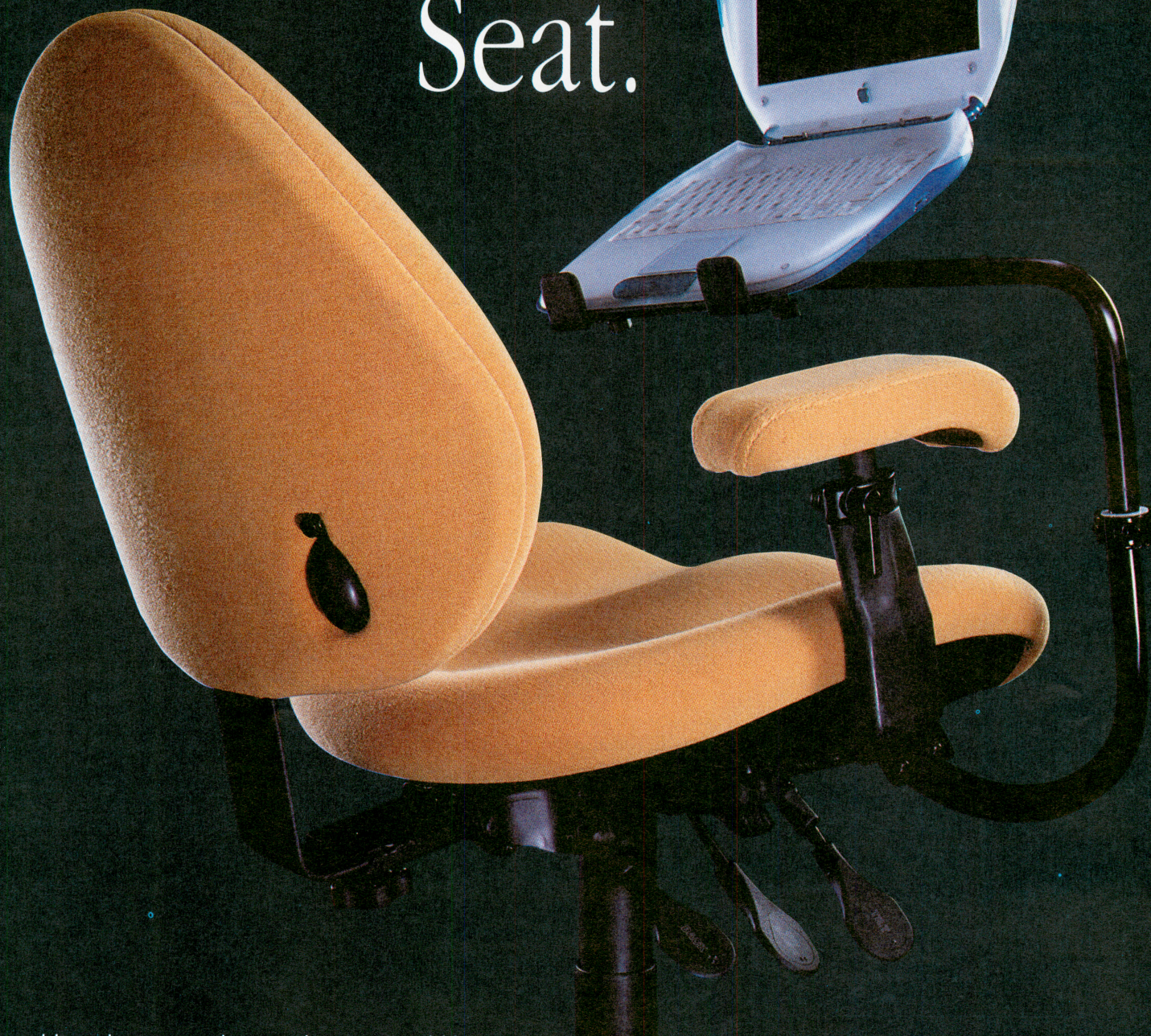
**Y**ou know that sinking, queasy, stomach-churning feeling you get? The call you meant to make, the appointment you were supposed to keep, the birthday or anniversary you don't dare forget. Are you just one memory lapse away from disaster? There's no need to worry if you use Now Up-to-Date & Contact, the #1 all-time best selling Macintosh contact manager and calendar. Keep to-do lists handy and let Now Up-to-Date's alarms remind you of those important events. Our unique AutoType™ feature enters names and addresses automatically. QuickDay and QuickContact menus put schedules and phone numbers a click away. The ability to recognize common phrases and automatically enter items on your calendar will amaze you. One-click email integration and built-in word processing help you stay in touch. And only Now Up-to-Date & Contact was designed to take advantage of the internet. Our web integration will have you soaring through cyberspace. Need a map or email address for someone? Just click the blazingly fast search button and the software does the rest. So get your priorities straight and synchronize your life. Get Up-to-Date now!



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## **BODYBILT**

From Space To The Workplace



# home Office watch

By Molly Wood

## Keep a Close Watch

**W**e're all interested in security

these days, what with virus alerts, Y2K paranoia, and increasingly smarter hackers and thieves. One of the easiest places for the aforementioned ne'er-do-wells to strike is a small office or home office. The "always-on" nature of 24-hour connections such as DSL can create an easy target, and home and small offices may be inadequately protected because of the lack of appropriate — and affordable — solutions.

Enter WatchGuard. The company's security solutions include two products specifically designed for small office/home office (SOHO) use. One, called WatchGuard SOHO, combines a comprehensive firewall with — and this is the good part — Internet sharing. The purchase price of about \$450 includes a one-year subscription to LiveSecurity, a service that alerts you to possible dangers and system updates via the Internet. Network up to 50 computers (for a little extra) in your small office, and WatchGuard acts as both a hub and a firewall. For another \$450, you can add what's called VPN (Virtual Private Network) security, which allows you to enable your security between sites, and lets an off-site administrator configure and manage the security.

The line also includes WatchGuard Telecommuter for \$650, which lets home workers securely connect to the corporate network. It also incorporates the VPN technology, including the VPN manager, which means the security can be configured and controlled remotely. Both products support DSL, cable modem, and IDSN connections.

WatchGuard SOHO, \$450-\$900

WatchGuard, [www.watchguard.com](http://www.watchguard.com), 800-734-9905



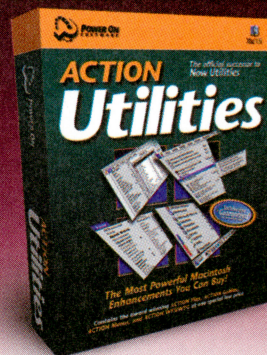
## The Right Way

**R**esources, resources, resources. Few things are more important to ongoing success than knowing where to look. After all, you got where you are by helping yourself, right? Help streamline that entrepreneurial spirit with SmartOnline.com. It's a site whereby SOHO professionals can get ongoing reference materials and business tools.

The site offers solutions for getting started, writing business plans, conducting market research, creating business correspondence, and more, including researching and creating landlord-tenant agreements. Its references include answers to everyday office questions, ranging from word definitions to driving directions and updated currency exchange rates. SmartOnline also offers products, such as Smart Attorney 8.0, a legal information resource that includes a library of legal forms and business letters as well as a legal dictionary. See also Smart Business Plan 8.0, which helps new and existing business owners develop professional, customized business and marketing plans and get new capital.

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## Laser Power

### The Brother, The Elite, and The Optra

If you want fast, reliable printing, and you're not fond of running out and buying new cartridges every three months, then you'll want a laser printer. And if you want a printer that you can easily share among two or more Macs, then you'll want a networkable laser printer. Here, we look at three such printers: Brother's HL-1270N, GCC Technologies' Elite 12/600N, and Lexmark's Optra M410.

All three of these printers offers Ethernet connectivity for easy sharing — just run an Ethernet cable from the printer to an Ethernet hub, run an Ethernet cable from each Mac to the

hub, and then each Mac can select the printer in the Chooser. All three also provide PostScript emulation.

PostScript is

Adobe's printer language that describes how to render certain files using the maximum resolution the printer is capable of. Such files include those that contain PostScript fonts, as well as EPS (Encapsulated PostScript) files, which include logos and other forms of line art. Using PostScript, the same PostScript image on a 300 dpi (dots per inch) printer would come out much smoother on a printer capable of

laying down 600 dpi. If a printer lacks PostScript, it compensates either by using third-party PostScript emulation — which attempts to perform the same task as PostScript — or by rendering the image based on the picture that appears on the monitor.

Also, all three of these printers offer USB connectivity for connecting directly to a single Mac. If you only have one Mac, and you're not planning on adding more Macs to your family of gear, you can save some money by foregoing Ethernet on either of the two higher-end printers.

#### Meet the Printers

Brother's HL-1270N is the least expensive printer of the three: In fact, it's rare to find a \$499 printer that offers both Ethernet capability and PostScript emulation. It has a compact, square design, and even though it's smaller than the others, it still comes with a

generous, 250-sheet paper cassette, which also sticks out of the back of the printer to accommodate not only letter-sized paper but also legal-sized paper. The HL-1270N has a front-loading manual-feed slot, which accommodates envelopes, cards, and other non-standard formats. A panel of four lights tells you the printer's status — whether it's receiving data, having a problem, or ready and waiting.



The Elite 12/600N provides excellent contrast.

Next up on the price scale, we find the \$829 Optra M410 from Lexmark. This printer has an unusual, tall, curvy design that some may like and others may not like so much. It sports an LCD (liquid crystal display) readout which gives you more detailed feedback on your print jobs than can be expressed using only simple on/off lights, and it provides a panel of buttons with which you can scroll through a bevy of menus and settings. To load in envelopes and other custom-sized

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The Optra M410 has an exotic, curvy shape.

paper stock, you fold down the front panel to gain access to the M410's manual-feed tray.

The Elite 12/600N, from GCC Technologies, is \$20 more expensive than the Optra, and is similar in many ways. It also provides an LCD with buttons for navigating through its various menus and, as with the Optra, you fold down a panel to gain access to its manual-feed tray. In contrast to the alternative look of the Optra, the Elite has a more traditional rectilinear design.

### If Looks Could Kill

In terms of image quality, there was a marked difference between the Brother and the two higher-end printers. Text that's seven points and smaller began to show small gaps, whereas the more expensive printers were able to render four-point italic type with smooth, unbroken lines. Also, the Brother's gradients were coarser, showing banding rather than smooth transitions between grays, so photographs came out a bit rougher. It did very poorly in the EPS tests, rendering all EPS images with blocky pixels, so its PostScript emulation is not nearly as capable as that of the higher-end printers.

Between the two more-expensive

printers, the Elite came out slightly ahead in image quality, showing excellent contrast. The Elite was better able to distinguish between 80% and 90% black on the dark end, and between 20% and 30% black on the light end. And on the Optra, 90% black looked pretty darn close to solid black. As a result, photographs on the Elite came out richer and clearer, and desktop publishing documents (such as the pages of this very magazine) came out with shaded boxes that were closer to their corresponding colors.

### A Day at the Races

In our speed tests, each of these printers had their strengths and weaknesses. In printing from Microsoft Word, they were very close, but the inexpensive Brother took the lead, followed by the Optra, and then by the Elite. They each took about a minute and a half to print a 15-page document of double-spaced text. (For each of these printers, Ethernet speeds were about the same as performance over USB.) The Elite was surprisingly slow with QuarkXPress, taking, for example, about two and a half minutes to print a document that



The HL-1270N is a good, inexpensive laser.

the others printed in about one minute. The Optra was a little faster than the others in printing from Adobe Illustrator, printing a complex drawing in about 30 seconds whereas the others took about 45.

### The Toner Factor

The Brother comes with a toner cartridge that is expected to last for 3,000 prints. Replacement cartridges run about \$50, or \$80 for a 6,000-print cartridge. (Remember, these are manufacturers estimates.) The Optra's cartridges have an estimated yield of

5,000 prints, and costs \$104 to replace. A cartridge expected to last 10,000 prints costs \$174. The Elite's cartridge is expected to yield 6,000 prints, and replacements cost \$114 each, or three for \$282. So at its best, the Brother costs about 1.3 cents per print; The Elite, 1.6 cents per page, and the Optra, 1.7 cents per page.

### The Final Decision

For many, Brother's HL-1270N might be the printer of choice, since it's inexpensive and handles all the basics. But if you think you're going to need to work with more complicated graphics, then you might want to invest the extra dollars in a more PostScript-savvy printer, such as the Optra M410 or the Elite 12/600. Of the two, I was hard pressed to declare a winner. If your main concern is image quality, and you can stand to wait a little longer for your Quark files, go for the Elite. But if you can stand to lose some contrast in your output, the Optra M410 is a fine overall printer. **VIII**

#### rating

HL-1270N

\$499, Brother

800-284-4329

[www.brother.com](http://www.brother.com)

 Inexpensive, low cost of operation, small footprint, fast at some tasks

 Poor PostScript handling

#### rating

Elite 12/600N

\$849 (799 without Ethernet), GCC Technologies

800-422-7777

[www.gcctech.com](http://www.gcctech.com)

 Excellent contrast, excellent detail, good PostScript handling

 Expensive, slow at some tasks

#### rating

Optra M410

\$829 (\$699 without Ethernet), Lexmark

800-539-6275

[www.lexmark.com](http://www.lexmark.com)

 Good PostScript handling, good speeds overall

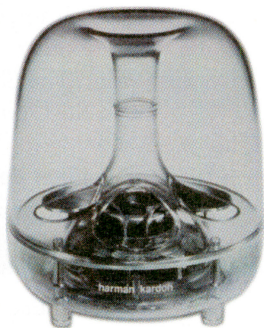
 Poor contrast, runs dark



## iSub

**H**arman/Kardon's iSub is a subwoofer designed specifically to complement the iMac. It adds depth, bass, and even volume to the internal speakers of the second-generation iMacs — from the \$999 base model up to the DV Special Edition — which are also designed by Harman/Kardon.

When plugged into the iMac via USB, the iSub re-routes and outputs lower-frequency sound, and thereby doubles the sound output of the internal speakers. The sound is acceptably clear, with a minimum of distortion, and the bass is certainly impressive, if sometimes a bit too heavy. For streaming multimedia or even playing CDs, you'll find the volume and bass level to be perfectly adequate. Indeed, during testing, not a few office doors were closed in annoyance (a good



test of the "if it's too loud, you're working too hard" principle).

The USB connection makes the iSub truly plug-and-play, since it comes with no software to install. But unfortunately, the iSub has no volume control, no equalizer, and no way to figure out what went wrong if, as we did a couple of times, you plug the iSub in and it doesn't work.

The iSub's major limitation is that it doesn't work with any speakers but those of the iMac. Essentially, this means it can't be upgraded — you'll never be able to integrate the iSub into any future stereo needs, such as surround sound for DVD watching. For \$99, as the folks at Harman/Kardon like to say, you can turn your iMac into a stereo system. They're right, but once you do it, you're stuck with it.

Aside from the sound, the iSub's other obvious quality is its unique appearance, which, I should warn you, is not exactly

what you'd expect if you've seen its picture. It's not smoky gray — in fact, it's completely clear and bucket-shaped, with a column in the middle that looks a little like a tornado. Its surface creates a few visions of fingerprint smudges and potential dinginess, but the kooky look kind of grows on you after a while.

**The Final Decision** The iSub does its job well. If you don't expect anything more, it's probably perfect. But if you're looking for a subwoofer with a few controls, or one that can be made part of a more expandable system, the iSub isn't for you.

— Molly Wood

### rating

\$99, Harman/Kardon  
877-266-2602  
www.harman-multimedia.com

USB, adds bass, depth, and volume to iMac's internal speakers

Can't be expanded or upgraded, no volume or sound quality controls

## AutoEye 1.0

**N**o matter how slick you are with digital cameras and scanners, you are always, to an extent, at the mercy of your equipment. Some low-end cameras, for example, can give your images some funky exposures. AutoEye, from AutoFX Software, is a \$99 Photoshop plug-in designed to improve digital images by reclaiming lost colors, improving image quality, improving details, enhancing and sharpening, and more. It can also be used as a stand-alone application.

AutoEye is geared primarily to the professional market, and some of its features reflect that orientation. It lets you batch process images from within Photoshop, enhance images converted from RGB to CMYK, and improve stock images.

Because AutoEye is an application as well as a plug-in, you can drag-and-drop an image over its icon, which is convenient. You can also create and save presets to the Automatic pull-down menu.

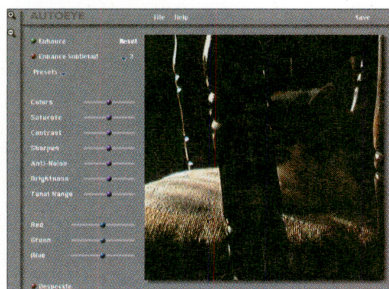
The interface looks simple at first, but many of the functions are confusing. The main buttons should be green and

red (for "on" and "off"), but instead they are green and brown, so the metaphor was lost. The two main functions are Enhance and Enhance

SubDetail, but the difference between the two was not entirely clear. In addition, switching off the Enhance button disables the interactive slider bars that appear under Enhance SubDetail. Similarly, the Reset button is placed next to the Enhance button, but actually affects the SubDetail slider controls. There were no tool tips or online help (aside from a link to the company Website), and the manual was scanty.

But the main problem was that after experimenting with the controls, I simply found it difficult to improve my images. AutoEye had a propensity to automatically sharpen them, even when it wasn't needed.

Also, because AutoEye depends on



QuickTime technology (it requires version 3.0.2 or higher), images enhanced with AutoEye are saved in QuickTime rather than Photoshop format, which I found a bit disconcerting.

**The Final Decision** Despite its many professional capabilities, AutoEye 1.0's confusing interface, unneeded sharpening, and poor documentation impeded its usefulness.

— Jackie Dove

### rating

\$99, Auto/FX  
800-839-2008  
www.autofx.com

All-in-one photo enhancer, comes in stand-alone application or plug-in, drag-and-drop convenience, easy presets

Confusing interface, unneeded automatic sharpening, sketchy manual.



## PetiScan

**R**oad warriors, rejoice! You can scan documents from a hotel room, from a café, or from a moving train (as long as the ride's not too bumpy), by means of NEC's PetiScan, a scanner that's so petite you can hold it in one hand.

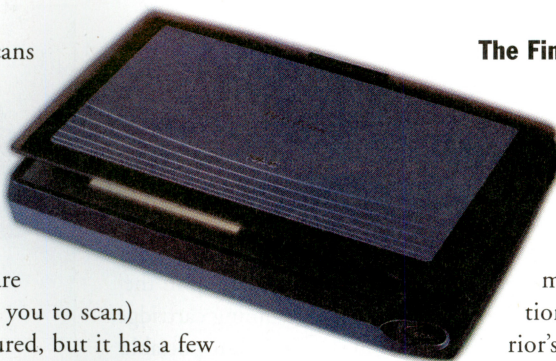
It's a spiffy little silver-and-grey device, and it comes with a padded foam carrying case. The scanning bed measures 6in. x 4in., so it's perfect for accommodating conventional photographs. It has a window on the other side of the scanning bed, so if you're scanning text, you can snap off the lid, turn it over, and align the PetiScan by looking through from the other side.

It's got a button on the front that immediately calls up the scanning software, making it very easy to zip through a stack of photos.

To compensate for its small size, the PetiScan makes use of a piece of software called Presto! ImageStitching, which allows you to stitch together

multiple scans into the same file. The scanning driver (the software that allows you to scan) is full-featured, but it has a few rough spots. For some reason, it appears twice in the menu when you're scanning into Photoshop. And sometimes the buttons, such as those for added contrast, don't respond right away, and sometimes you have to click them twice.

When it comes to scan quality, the PetiScan does not come close to desktop scanners. Scans from the PetiScan came out noticeably more pixelated than those of Umax's \$179 MX3, for example, even when scanning at the same resolution. This could be due to the fact that the PetiScan can capture 30 bits of color information, whereas the MX3 can capture 36-bit color.



## The Final Decision

Despite the PetiScan's one or two down-sides, it's a slick little scanner that could make a handy addition to a road warrior's arsenal of gear.

But if you need the quality of your portable scanner to match that of your desktop scanner, you might want to wait for some improvements in the portable arena.

— David Weiss

## rating



**\$149, NEC Technologies**  
800-632-4636  
[www.nec.com](http://www.nec.com)  
USB Required

👍 **Portable, sleek design, needs no external power, has scan button, comes with case**

👎 **Scans are inferior to those of desktop scanners**



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## MiniView™ USB KVM CONNECTIVITY

**Mac & PC**  
Control Macs and PCs with a single mouse, keyboard and monitor!



Introducing three milestones in our quest to bring Macs and PCs together - the ADB & USB KVM switches. While our Dual Platform MiniView (G-CS12DP) is perfect for older Mac configurations, our two and four-port USB KVM switches allow four USB devices and a monitor to be shared among two or four computers. And because these switches are USB-based, Macs, PCs and any other USB-compatible systems can share the same peripherals. Visit us on the web at [www.iogear.com/machome](http://www.iogear.com/machome) to see how we can put these revolutionary new switches to work for you.





## BJC-85 Portable Printer

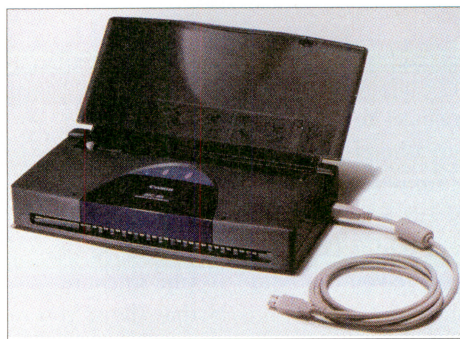
If James Bond needed a printer, my guess is that he'd make use of something like Canon's BJC-85. It's a portable, dark-grey printer that's both small enough and light enough to easily carry in a briefcase or, if you're more casual than Mr. Bond, a backpack. And this little number prints in color.

The lid, when unfolded, becomes a paper tray that can hold a stack of up to 30 sheets of plain paper. You can also load in photo paper, card stock, stickers, or any other paper that you'd use with a desktop printer.

The simple front panel provides you with three buttons for turning the machine on, moving the cartridges to the center when you need to replace them, and resuming a print that's been held up by a paper jam or a cartridge swap. An error light comes on if something's amiss, but thankfully, during my weeks of testing, it never lit up.

One incredibly nifty feature is that you can purchase a scanning cartridge for \$99. Yes, you heard right — pop out the print cartridge, pop in the scanning cartridge, and your portable printer is now a portable scanner. Unfortunately, this add-on wasn't available at press time, so we were unable to try it out.

For the BJC-85 you do pay a price for portability. It's much slower than all of the desktop printers we've seen, taking about five minutes to print a low-resolution photo that normally takes about a minute to print. Text comes out very slowly as well, as in two and a half minutes for a page of double-spaced text. But when it emerges, you won't see a difference between its quality and that of a desktop inkjet. However, for color photos, its output is noticeably grainier



than that of most desktop inkjets.

**The Final Decision** Even though this printer won't come near to matching the

print quality of a desktop inkjet when it comes to photos and other complicated graphics, it certainly produces serviceable drafts. If you're going mobile with an iBook or a PowerBook, then you might want to take along a BJC-85.

— David Weiss

**rating**

\$299, Canon  
800-652-2666  
www.canon.com

Portable, light, easy to set up, has infrared port

Slower, grainier, and more expensive than a desktop printer

## Grammarian 2

We've been a fan of Grammarian, from Casady & Greene, for quite some time now (See our review in July, 1998). You'll be happy to know that hasn't changed, and Grammarian has only improved over the years. Grammarian, as the name implies, is a grammar-

checking tool that checks your writing for faulty sentence structure, punctuation errors, or just plain old bad writing.

With the release of the newest installment, Grammarian 2.0, some major changes are in effect. First, and most noticeably, the famed grammar-checker is now an application, rather than a system utility. This means it's compatible with more applications, it's faster, and it's more stable.

Grammarian works within most applications, too, from word processing documents to email. The 2.0 version includes an updated engine that makes it even pickier than before — now it uses even more styles and rules. Grammarian is extremely involved.

It searches for everything from redundant to sexual or racial phrases, and even lets you specify your writing

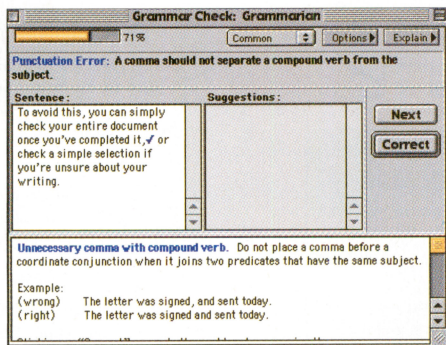
tone, your readability level based on grade, and grammatical features that you might want to ignore.

It includes a feature that will check as you go and announce your mistakes aloud. Frankly, this feature can be a little annoying, as Grammarian is exceedingly sensitive. To avoid this, you can simply check your entire document once you've completed it, or check a single selection if you're unsure about your writing.

Grammarian loses track of the cursor in some programs — including Microsoft Word — especially when using arrow keys or mouse clicks, so the Interactive Checking feature has the frustrating habit of announcing a mistake based on text that has already been deleted. You can get around this by simply checking the entire document or a single selection, but it's an irritating quirk in an otherwise fine program.

**The Final Decision** Grammarian will certainly make you a better writer if you let it, and its range and astounding grasp of language can't be rivaled by a word processing program.

— Molly Wood



**rating**

\$50, Casady & Greene  
www.casadyg.com  
831-484-9228

Amazing array of features, fabulous grasp of language, will make you a better writer

It can't always keep track of the cursor in one or two applications

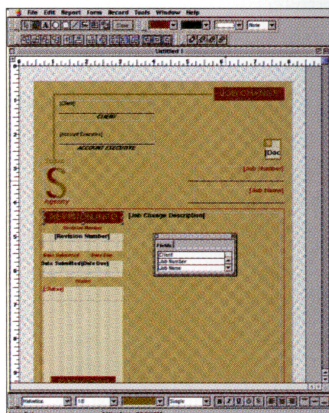


## Details 3.0.1

When we last visited AEC Software's Details, a terrific project information management program, it got extremely high marks as a feature-packed, easy-to-use program (May, 1999). Whether you just want to keep tabs on your business contracts, or you need to track an important project from conception to execution, Details helps get you organized — quickly. Version 3 is a major upgrade, adding a bevy of features to make your business reports more comprehensive without sacrificing ease of use.

Chief among these new features is the ability to create custom forms to support the specific requirements of your business. So you can produce forms that exactly match your paper forms. You don't have to know how to draw to create one, either. Just take one of Details' 70 QuickStart templates, and then call

up one of the program's convenient control palettes. Click here, drag-and-drop there, then add the information fields you need. Convenient drawing tools let you add shapes and color. The program has a new tool that allows you to import images, such as a business logo. In short order, you'll be developing a professional-caliber form.



As with the previous version, Details can talk with its flagship project manager, FastTrack Schedule, so you can use both programs in harmony. And if you must use Windows computers in

your business, you'll be pleased to know that Details comes in a Windows version as well. This is both good and bad; in the effort to provide cross-platform compatibility, the publisher hasn't made a large effort to support AppleScript and other Mac-only features, with the sole exception of Mac OS 9's multiple users capability.

The spec sheet for this program lists

22 new features, including Web graphic support, an enhanced Help system, and autofit columns. Yet Details has avoided the program bloat that infects many programs as they develop new capabilities. It runs just fine with the standard 10MB of RAM (with virtual memory on) and takes a mere 22MB of hard disk storage space.

**The Final Decision** The ability to build custom forms using Details' comprehensive set of editing tools adds a whole new dimension to this superlative project management program. I recommend it highly.

— Gene Steinberg

### rating

\$299, AEC Software  
703-450-1980  
www.aecsoft.com

 QuickStart templates and convenient help tips get you started quickly; supports Mac OS 9's multiple users feature; Mac/Windows compatibility

 Other Mac features, such as AppleScript, still not supported

## PhotoMontage

They say a picture's worth a thousand words, but in the case of ArcSoft's PhotoMontage, a picture can also be worth a thousand pictures. PhotoMontage allows you to re-create a single picture using hundreds of "micro-pictures," and you can not only work with your own source image, but you can use your own micro-pictures as well, for a goofy, fun, and creative way to play with your digital images and color printer.

If you don't happen to have hundreds of tiny digital photo files sitting on your hard disk, use any of the 20,000 micro-images that come on the CD. Just start with your own digital photo, click on Build Montage, prompt the program to use the images on the CD, click OK, and the program will dutifully re-create your original photo using the micro-images. The program is smart — it knows how to use those tiny pictures of sailboats, trees, and buildings to re-create all of the details and colors of your original image.

If you want, click an option to allow color variation, so that you can repeat just one or two images over and over again to render the source image. This is a great feature if, for

example, you want each of the micro-images to be a member of your family. The program also allows you a good amount of control over your montage. You can adjust the size and number of the micro-images, and tell the program how often, if ever, you'd like your micro-images to repeat.

The program crashes when adding large numbers of images into a new album, and it warns you that there's a limit, but it would be nice if it gave you an error message instead of crashing. Also, sometimes when I tried to print a montage on one



piece of paper, I'd get a weird incoherent printout.

### The Final Decision

Despite its propensity to crash rather than giving you a badly needed

error message, PhotoMontage is a hoot. It's inexpensive, and you can use it to create some fun, creative, and powerful images.

— David Weiss

### rating

\$40, ArcSoft  
800-762-8657  
www.arcsoft.com

 Fun, inexpensive, flexible

 Lacks some badly needed error feedback

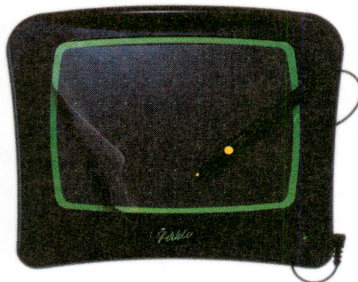


## Pablo Internet Edition

The Pablo Internet Edition is a drawing tablet intended for artists looking to dip their toes into the sea of digital design. This so-called "Internet Edition" tablet is bundled with Adobe PageMill 3.0, Totally Hip's Web Painter 3, and Adobe Photoshop 5.0 LE. Aside from these applications, the tablet itself does nothing to warrant its net-savvy moniker.

It's somewhat difficult to plug-and-play with the Pablo tablet. The included CD-ROM does not include the Mac driver, so you've got to visit the Website and download it.

It has a 6in. by 8in. drawing area, which is ample for tablets in this range. However, it has a rather modest 256 lev-



els of pressure sensitivity. Apply just a touch of pressure and you get a thin, light stroke. Apply a lot of pressure and you get a thick, heavy line. And it's not well-suited to Adobe Photoshop LE —

Light brushstrokes appear pixelated.

The default pressure sensitivity is rather high, forcing you to apply a fair amount of pressure to the tablet before a stroke can be cast.

Thankfully, the sensitivity can be adjusted with

the KB Gear control panel. Setting the pressure sensitivity to medium provided the best balance in our tests.

It's a shame that KB Gear did not strike an agreement with MetaCreations to include Art Dabbler, which digitally mimics the subtle nuances of paints, pencils, charcoals, and crayons. To its credit, the Pablo did perform flawlessly with both Art Dabbler and its big sister, Painter 6.

Also, the pen must be tethered to the tablet. This can be an inconvenience to artists if the pen's wiring gets in the way of a brushstroke. To help keep the wiring from running amok, KB Gear has included a pen outlet at both the left and right side of the tablet.

**The Final Decision** Despite its shortcomings, The Pablo Internet Edition is a very good entry-level drawing tablet at an impressive price — It's like buying Adobe Photoshop LE (\$99) and getting a free tablet.

— Chris McVeigh

|                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>rating</b>                                                                                                           |
| <b>\$99, KB Gear</b><br><b>612-656-6000</b><br><b>www.kbgear.com</b><br><b>USB required</b>                             |
| <b>Inexpensive, large drawing area</b>                                                                                  |
| <b>Must download drivers before use, would have been better bundled with Art Dabbler, pen is tethered to the tablet</b> |

## Kritter USB

The KritterUSB is an inexpensive video camera for making short movies, teleconferencing, or setting up a Webcam. It's the stuff of dreams for an industrial designer — the Kritter's sleek form and bulbous head are perfect examples of iMac-inspired coolness.

The Kritter is a thing of beauty on the software side, too, requiring only one extension to work properly. The installation process should be held as an example for other peripheral manufacturers: Simply pop in the CD, open the Install folder, and drag the extension into your system folder. That's it. Compare that to Logitech's QuickCam USB, which requires three extensions to work. Definitely sleek.

The Kritter uses ReelEyes LE — iREZ's own "video Swiss army knife" — to capture and play back your movies. While you can't use it to move scenes around, as you can with iMovie, ReelEyes is easy to use and quite effective.

The Kritter lacks a microphone, so it can't be used to its fullest potential on

the iBook, which lacks a sound-in port. We tried bringing sound in via a USB microphone connected to a USB hub (a hub is necessary since the iBook only has one USB port), but the iBook couldn't support both audio and video from different ports.

That's unfortunate, since the Kritter is clearly designed to match the clamshell-shaped wonder, as it comes in blueberry and tangerine.

Also, the Kritter's legs, which are designed to clamp onto an iBook screen, are a bit unsuited to sitting on top of an iMac — the camera will easily roll down the back of your fruit-flavored bundle of joy. Finally, one advantage the QuickCam has over the Kritter is its ability to automatically adjust its brightness levels. The Kritter cannot adjust any of its settings on its own; you have to change them manually.

Despite the matching color schemes, the iBook and the Kritter do not make



beautiful music together. In fact, they make no music at all: an iBook with a Kritter only makes silent movies.

### The Final Decision

The Kritter easily outshines the QuickCam — its only real compe-

tition — in ease-of-use. And because you can focus it manually with the simple ring on the front of the lens, it has a leg-up on other cameras as well, such as those from Ariston and Zoom. But if you've got an iBook, you might want to think twice about buying yourself a Kritter.

— Alex Handy

|                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>rating</b>                                                               |
| <b>\$129, iREZ</b><br><b>480-922-0044</b><br><b>www.irez.com</b>            |
| <b>Inexpensive, easy to install, really cute</b>                            |
| <b>Lacks microphone for use with iBooks, unstable when perched on iMacs</b> |





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# A Three-In-One Machine

Brother's MFC-8300 Wears Many Hats **By** David Weiss

If you've got a small home office, then you know how quickly it can fill up with gear. Hence the allure of the multi-function product (MFP) that can play more than one role. Brother's MFC-8300 is such a unit, capable of printing, faxing, and copying.

The MFC-8300, even though it will save you space because it serves multiple functions, is a large machine because it has a laser printer; it's much larger than the inkjet MFPs we reviewed in January, as well as more expensive. Although lasers lack color (at least in this price range), they're much faster than inkjets, and they can print many more pages before you have to buy more ink or toner. The size of the MFC-8300 is not necessarily a liability, because it's well-endowed with controls and features that none of the less expensive MFPs have. It comes with its own phone — with a svelte little handset that sits in a cradle to the side of the unit. It features a small but clear LCD (liquid crystal display) that's split into two sections for the status of printing and faxing. The control panel that runs along the top of the unit has a telephone touch-pad, a panel for 32 programmable fax numbers, and three additional panels for controlling the fax, printer, and copier functions.

## Printing

The MFC-8300 has a hearty 250-sheet paper cassette that can accommodate either legal or letter-sized paper. It also has a handy, front-loading manual-feed slot for oddly-sized documents such as

cards and envelopes.

It prints in 600 dpi (dots per inch) resolution, which is perfectly fine for text and line art, but more complicated, subtle graphics, such as those involving photographs, come out a little coarse.



Also, because it lacks PostScript, EPS (encapsulated PostScript) files look a bit pixelly. Of course, if you don't do much desktop publishing, you won't encounter many EPS files.

Unfortunately, it could not handle a three-page

QuarkXPress document containing graphics and text. After one page, the printer returned the message that it had run out of memory. You can, however, upgrade the RAM for an additional fee.

In the speed department, the printer held its own in most tests. It can print 15 pages from Microsoft Word in a little over a minute and a half, which is about as quickly as most laser printers in its price range.

## Faxing

The MFC-8300 has a good, solid, full-featured fax machine. You can put up to 30 pages in the feeder at one time, and it does its work quickly — when you send faxes, pages get pulled through rather quickly — much quicker than *MacHome's* regular fax machine.

You can also send one fax to 182 locations, so you can set up a list of "regulars" and easily get the word out to them without dedicating a day to faxing.

The MFC-8300 sports many more fax features that will take you a good couple of months to explore. You can have the phone ring with a special ring, to alert you when faxes are coming in, store faxes in memory, and forward faxes — all functions that you'd expect in an office machine.

## Copying

You can also use the MFC-8300 to make copies. With this function, you can use the 30-sheet paper feeder to easily copy large documents. The MFC-8300's copier isn't just an afterthought — you can also enlarge or reduce copies, just like a standard copy machine.

**The Final Decision** The MFC-8300 is a good all-around machine for a reasonable price. Its fax capabilities are excellent, and the added phone makes it stand above other MFPs. As with most MFPs, however, it's rare that all of its functions are of the same quality — and in this case, it's the printer that suffers, if only a bit, because it lacks PostScript and can't be networked. Someday you might yearn for a better printer. **MII**

## rating

MFC-8300  
\$499, Brother  
800-284-4329  
[www.brother.com](http://www.brother.com)  
USB Required

 Inexpensive, full-featured, saves space, decent printer with large paper tray, full-featured fax, comes with telephone

 No scanner; printer is a bit slow and coarse, has limited RAM, and is not networkable



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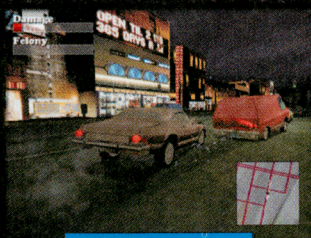
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# Does it Hurt and Have a Temperature?

## Keeping Your Mac Virus-Free

**A** happy Mac is a virus-free Mac. But even the most responsible Mac owners accidentally allow an occasional virus invasion. You can't be too careful.

Computer viruses are wily and can be hard to detect because they are designed to break into your system and do their damage silently before you even know they're there.

Then all of a sudden, whammo! You have a very sick Mac on your hands as the virus destroys files, damages your hard drive, and even devastates your operating system.

Some computer viruses can be annoying but harmless, doing things such as displaying a silly message on your computer screen. (One celebrated virus — harmless but horrifying — actually flashed little smiley faces on screens.)

While our charmed Mac community has been, for the most part, virus-free (compared to the Windows world), a few little nasties have poked their way through. The first trick to fighting Mac viruses is awareness. The second trick is to take reasonable precautions while you're downloading files and opening email attachments from the Internet or transferring files from floppy disks, CDs, or a network.

You don't have to be insanely paranoid. Keeping your Mac free of viruses is surprisingly similar to keeping yourself healthy. There are simple precautions you should take, and certain things you should avoid, and these will effectively protect you from any viruses lurking on the landscape.

### What is a Virus?

A computer virus is a small program designed to insert itself into a file that contains another program. When this program runs, the virus becomes active, and that can cause trouble. Once launched, the infection program copies itself from one file to another, and from one machine to another.

While the term *virus* has a specific definition, other infections such as worms and Trojan horses are also semantically lumped into the virus category because their behavior is viral.

### You Little Worm!

A worm is a special kind of virus, a self-contained program that replicates itself without infecting other programs. But it can be just as disabling to your Mac as any other virus.

In 1998, for instance, a particularly vile and potent worm, called AutoStart 9805, was a virtual pandemic. At that time, the popular Mac anti-virus pro-

gram, Disinfectant, was powerless against this worm as it grounded computers nearly to a halt and cut a destructive swath through disk files.

The AutoStart 9805 is caught via floppy disks, removable cartridge drives, and hard disks. It enters the computer via the QuickTime Settings control panel. To prevent it, just uncheck the Enable CD-ROM AutoPlay checkbox in the AutoPlay



option of the QuickTime control panel. (Leave Enable Audio CD AutoPlay alone, as the virus is powerless with that setting.)

A Trojan horse is a deceitful program that comes to you in the guise of an innocuous or helpful application, such as a screen saver or perhaps a small utility, and then proceeds ahead on its destructive path.



## Macro Virus

Macro Viruses are very common, but can only be transmitted through programs that use macros. Word processing programs, for example, allow you to automate certain repetitive tasks via macros, but macros are also an entry point for viruses.

A macro virus is carried within a document and will infect other documents that you open within the same program. If you disable macros, you won't have to worry about macro viruses invading your computer. Microsoft Word has a macro virus protection feature in its preferences.

Then too, some macro viruses can only affect Windows machines, but can still be passed on by Macs.

## Inoculation

Despite this litany of evil, common sense and simple precautions can protect your Mac from most viruses.

While it's possible to catch a computer virus through the Internet or from an online service, you are far more likely to encounter one through a computer lab at school or the library. That's because most commercial services do a good job of keeping their downloadable software clean.

However, downloading software from Internet bulletin boards and non-commercial sources can be risky. Viruses are also transmitted by infected commercial software (yes, the nicely packaged boxes on the shelf) that has not been carefully scanned. Here are a few tips:

- Never (ever) transfer files via floppy disk from a public computer (such as at school or the library) into your computer at home unless that disk has been thoroughly scanned for viruses.
- Never (ever) open email attachments from people you don't know unless you first scan them with your anti-virus program. Just downloading an attachment that contains a virus is not enough to infect your computer. Opening a piece of email will not launch a virus — you must first open the file to become infected.
- Back up all of your data on a regular basis: If a virus destroys your files,

# Up Close and Personal

## How To Create a Webcam By Alex Handy

**W**ouldn't it be nice if you could watch your kids while they toil away for endless hours at college? What if you could watch your hamster's daily activities around the house when you're at work?

Use your iMac to set up a webcam and you can do all this and so very much more. Why, you could even watch a can of Spam 24 hours a day. Oh wait, someone's already done that ([www.fright.com/spam/spamcam.html](http://www.fright.com/spam/spamcam.html)).

Throwing a webcam up on the net is easy, and with our CD this month comes a bunch of goodies to help you do it. If you somehow lose our CD, all of the programs we mention can be had at [www.download.com](http://www.download.com). First, though, we'll need a camera. If you've got an older Mac with serial ports (modem and printer ports) you can use a Connectix QuickCam. The newer QuickCams, made by Logitech, are USB and will work well with an iMac. You might be able to track down an older serial QuickCam by rooting through the classifieds or the Web. If you do have an iMac, however, we're going to recommend that you get an iRez Kritter USB. This little guy comes in tangerine and blueberry, and he's designed to perch happily on top of an iBook or a monitor. And boy, is he cute!

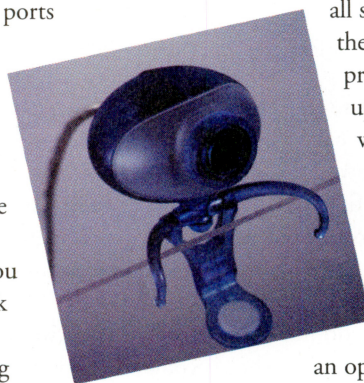
Now you'll need a copy of Quid Pro Quo, a shareware Web server. Quid Pro Quo allows you to host a Website on your Mac without having to use an outside service such as Geocities or your ISP. Next, you'll need to get a copy of Oculus, another piece of shareware. Oculus will do the grunt work of grabbing a picture from the camera for your website. Armed

with these two programs and a Kritter Cam, there's nothing we can't do!

First, install your Kritter USB. Keep in mind that you need to be running Mac OS 8.6 or higher to use the Kritter. Once you've installed it and made sure it's working (test it out by making a short movie about your nostril hair or something), it's time to install Quid Pro Quo. This is a relatively complex program, but we'll guide you through the tricky parts. (Afterwards, if you're interested, you can use Quid Pro Quo to serve up all sorts of other goodies onto the Web: It's a very powerful program.) When you first start up Quid Pro Quo, it will walk you through a setup routine. There are a lot of bizarre options to configure here so don't touch any of them unless we say so. Keep hitting the Next button until you come to

an option that asks for a server name: Put in whatever name you wish. Now, keep hitting Next until you come to an option that asks for a username and password. Again, use whatever you fancy, just don't forget them. Finally, skip ahead with the Next button until it asks you where you wish to place your root folder. The root folder will hold all the files for your website: the pictures, the HTML, and anything else you want to put in there. Browse through your hard drive and select an empty folder, or create a new one. Remember that folder because you'll need it later.

Once you're done configuring Quid Pro



Continued on page 48



you'll be glad you did.

- Be sure to turn off your virus scanner before installing new software (which the installation instructions will also tell you). Anti-virus programs can prevent other programs from being installed correctly.
- Some virus threats are merely hoaxes that invade the Internet through mailing lists and Internet newsgroups. Virus hoaxes are figments of the imagination, but can be time consuming and troublesome. Do not forward unverified virus warnings to others.

### Virus Fighters

Use a quality anti-virus program such as Norton AntiVirus 6 or Dr. Solomon's Virex. An anti-virus program works by scanning all the files in your hard drive, hunting down viruses, and destroying them. Each of these programs costs under \$100 — the best investment you can make. You only need one anti-virus program.

Be sure to keep your anti-virus software up to date by going to the manufacturer's Website and checking for updates, or by using the Live Update feature.

Virus definition updates are important because a virus scanner can't detect a virus it doesn't know. Downloading new virus definitions lets your anti-virus program recognize and eliminate new viruses.

Just as you do not live in fear of catching the common cold, do not live in fear of computer viruses. Unlike the common cold, however, computer viruses are relatively rare, can only spread under specific circumstances, and are easy to conquer. **III**

#### Norton AntiVirus 6

Symantec  
www.symantec.com  
(Web site has an extensive  
Antivirus Research Center)  
\$70

#### Dr. Solomon's Virex

Network Associates  
www.drsolomon.com  
\$50

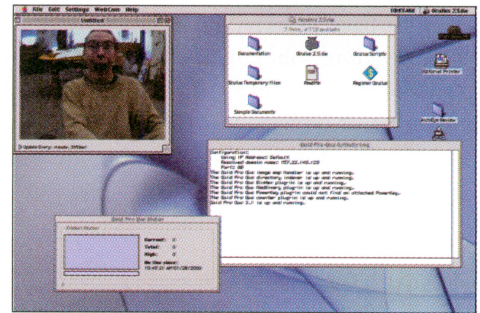
### Continued from page 47

Quo, move on to Oculus. Open it up and you'll be greeted with a vibrant image of whatever the camera is pointed at. This is the image you'll see on your webpage: Oculus updates it according to parameters you set. You can have Oculus take a picture every 30 seconds, every hour, or every time something moves in front of the lens. To get this image onto your webpage, you'll need to write yourself a little HTML. We won't go into how to do that here, however, since we've covered it many times in past issues. Write up a quick page with whatever info you wish on it, and leave a space open for your picture to go. Now, to get that picture, we have to go into the Settings menu and select Photo ... In this dialog box you'll see a lot of radio buttons at the bottom. Check the button that says File. When you do, a save dialog box will pop up. Navigate to your Quid Pro Quo root folder and save the photo as Picture in this folder. Now, close the Photo dialog box and open your webpage. Use the file we just created entitled Picture as your image. Insert the image into your HTML and save your webpage in the Quid Pro Quo root folder as Default.html. Voila! Yer all set. You can edit any of the other Oculus settings you like: Trigger ... is a good one to mess with, it's where you specify how often you want the camera to take a new picture. Just be sure to save your work in Oculus when you're done.

If you don't want to deal with using your computer as the web server, Oculus can send it's newly updated pictures to a remote FTP server with ease. Under the Photo ... dialog box, simply select FTP and type in the address of the FTP server and directory you want to send the image to. This will work with any open FTP server. Simply put in your username and password at the beginning of the address as you would in a web browser. Also, you can set Oculus to take a photo of any movement that it detects. It can store these images as separate files with a time stamp as well. This is perfect for the beleaguered worker who's stapler keeps disappearing from his or her desk (My own stapler vanished a month ago. It was a Swingline.)

Oculus is one nifty piece of software,

and Quid Pro Quo is just as cool for the intrepid explorer. There are a lot of cool bells and whistles in Quid Pro Quo. One thing you can do with it is use your Users and Groups accounts in conjunction with your website. Thus, you can give your coworkers access to your website with the same username and password they'd use to access your computer across the Appletalk network. If you set up an FTP server on your Mac (We recommend



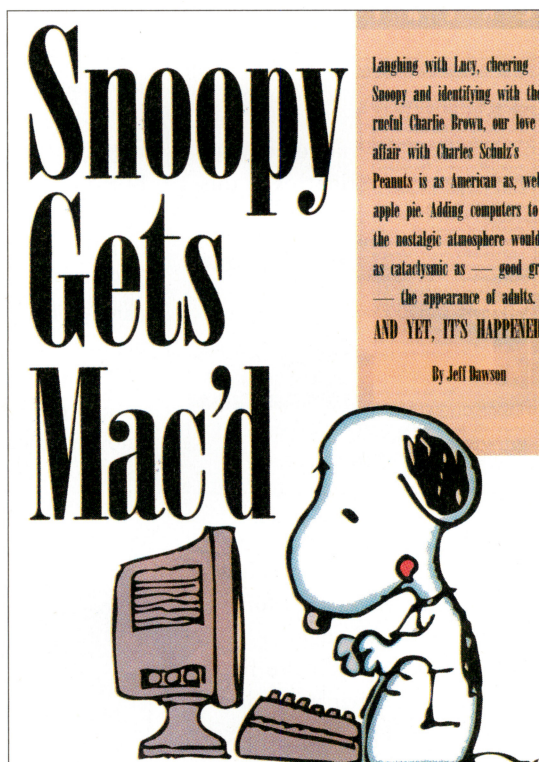
NetPresenz), you can use this feature to add your co-workers or roommates to your webcam page. Set up Oculus on their computers and have it FTP the images to your computer. Then put the pictures on your webcam page. Voila. There's no end to the possibilities.

Now you're ready to watch yourself through the Web. Open a Web browser and put in `http://*your IP address*`. You'll be whisked away to your webcam page. Smile, your public is watching. Since your camera's address will be changing every time you go online, you'll want to email friends and relatives the new link to your site each time you log on. If you have a permanent connection to the Internet, at work or school, you can eventually get a domain name (such as `webcam.machome.com`) for your webcam, thus removing the need to use your IP address as your Website's address. Oculus has a habit of forgetting its settings and changing the names of its files, so keep an eye on them to make sure they're the way you left them. We have a feeling most of these quirks will vanish if you register Oculus, something you should do whenever you use shareware for an extended period of time. It's a lot of work to keep a webcam going without a permanent Internet connection (DSL, T1, cable modem). **III**



# In Memorium

Charles Schulz, 1922 - 2000



It is with sadness that we note the passing of Charles Schulz, creator of Snoopy and the gang. Many of us grew up with this daily cartoon, and will miss the humor and the Sunday colored panels.

It is with some pride that we recall the exclusive Snoopy cover that Charles Schulz created for *MacHome* in our first year. We've reprised it on this page, and hope you get as much enjoyment out of it as we do.

For the full article as it ran in July of 1993, visit our Website at

[www.machome.com/snoopy](http://www.machome.com/snoopy)

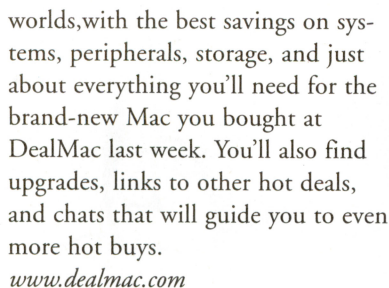
James Capparell, President, *MacHome Journal*

*James Capparell*

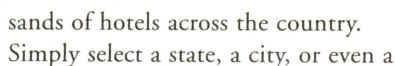


**G**o there! This month, we look at some of the ways to save online. Sure, there are a million sites that let you spend money, but how about a couple that actually let you spend money wisely? Read on ...

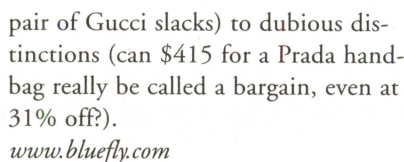
Well, we have to be true to our fearless leaders at Apple, right? And this site offers the best of many



For the intrepid and finance-conscious adventurer, Roomsaver.com offers coupons and discounts at thou-

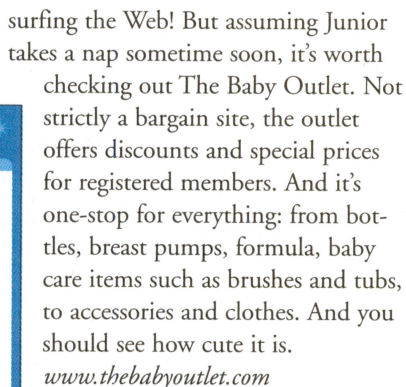


Billed as "the outlet store in your home," bluefly.com is the T.J. Maxx of the World Wide Web. Save up to 75% on top-quality (for the most part) clothing, accessories, coats, planners, even shoes and socks. Search an astonishing list of designers — and exponentially increase your knowledge of the fashion world — or simply browse an equally extensive list of categories. The selections range from genuine savings (74% off a



Well, that about sums it up, no? This site features infinite categories of big-name links and discount prices. Also, find a bargain hunters' discussion board, suggestions for further savings, links to price comparison sites like Cnet ([www.cnet.com](http://www.cnet.com)), CheapestDeals

Yeah, because those of you with brand-new babies have soooo much time for



Man, oh, man. We don't know whether to be thrilled or terrified by this particular discovery. A whole site devoted to getting you pounds of cheap java. Coffees are priced 15% to 45% below market, and they swear it's still good quality. Plus, they lure you in with an artfully placed graphic of a steaming cup of life-giving caffeinated beverage. Sneaky little buggers! Don't be discouraged, though, if you refrain from the manna itself: Coffee Direct also sells tea, hot drinks, brewers, grinders, supplies, and gifts.

[www.coffeedirect.com](http://www.coffeedirect.com) 



IT'S NOT JUST A NEW WORLD,  
IT'S A NEW STANDARD.

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- Computer Gaming World

“98%”\*

(Highest review score  
ever awarded)

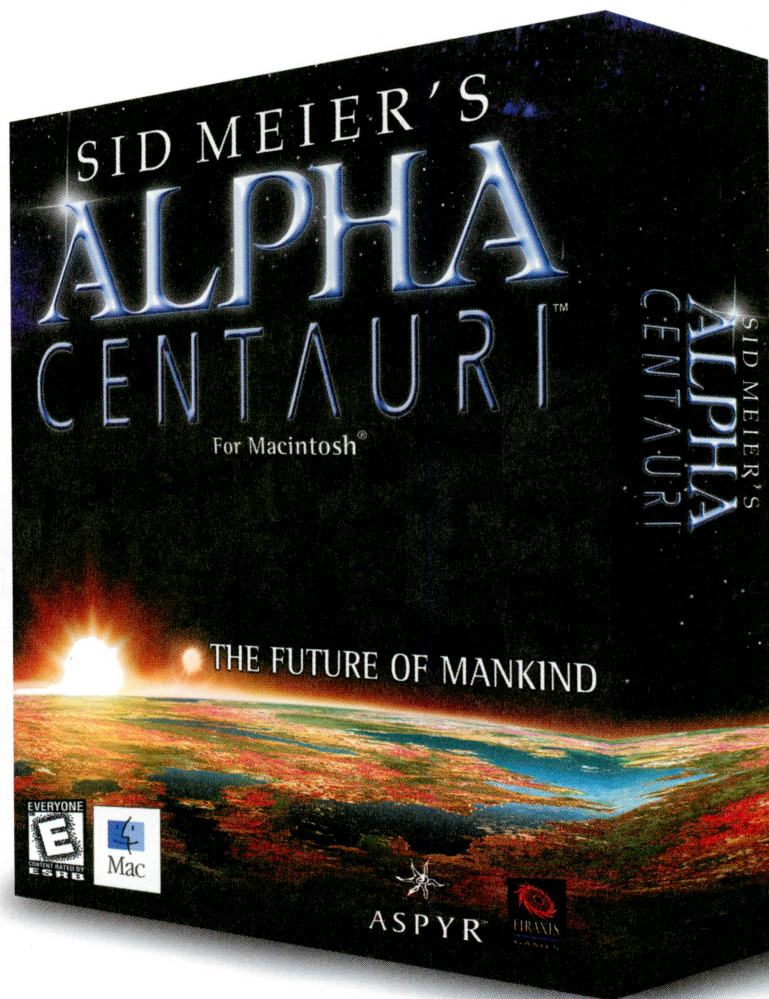
- PC Gamer

“Alpha Centauri is  
unmistakably the rightful  
heir to the Civilization  
throne. It's also the best  
strategy game ever made.”\*

- PC Gamer

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gold standard for strategy.”\*

- Newsweek



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## "A" for Internet

### Using the Web to Get Into College

Spring is in the air, and that means the little birdies will be ready to leave the nest all too soon. The tests, the applications, the planning, the financial aid, and finally (hopefully) the ivy-covered dormitories and trips to Abercrombie & Fitch. Of course, parents — and their offspring — are quaking in their college-bound boots.

As always, there's help to be had. From choosing a college to choosing a major once they get there, your children will need resources to get them on the road to university living, and the Internet should be their first stop.

Experts say the days are over when a promising young high school student could make a quick trip to the guidance counselor for hints on preparing for college. Shrinking school budgets and an increasing emphasis on student mental health (not that we don't want them paying attention to that!) have changed the priorities of the average guidance counselor.

High schools no longer have the resources to help your kids study for the SAT or ACT, fill out college applications, or learn about financial aid options. Worse, the absence of this essential service has led to a cottage industry that makes money from cataloging the information you need and selling it under the guise of getting your kids into the best schools, at the best price. Some sites, usually ones billing themselves as "independent advisors," sometimes charge up to \$3,000 simply advise families about higher education options.

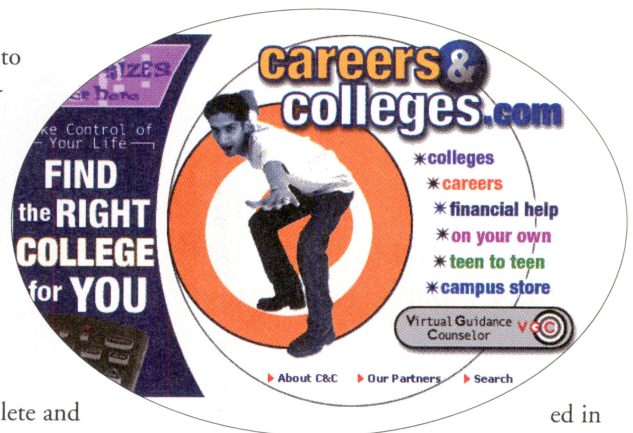
While you're welcome to take any approach to getting your kids into school — it is a fairly important decision, after all — it would behoove you to turn to the Net before you consider hiring a service. College is expensive enough!

One of the most complete and well-ordered sites you'll find is [www.careersandcolleges.com](http://www.careersandcolleges.com). The site is the online version of Careers & Colleges magazine, a quarterly publication that has long been helping students pick a school, pay for it, and get the most out of the experience once they're there. The Website, recently relaunched in its newest, helpful incarnation, hosts the same information.

"We think that kids shouldn't have to pay for this stuff," says Gail Karlitz, publisher of Careers & Colleges. "We want to tell kids what's available to them, what choices there are for their lives and how to go after it."

At [careersandcolleges.com](http://careersandcolleges.com), your kids will find a Virtual Guidance Counselor,

with links that can help them think through the process of choosing a major. Visitors to the site can look at a potential major or area of interest and see the careers that can result, the salaries they might expect, and articles related to the course of study. Conversely, if your college-bound birdie is interest



ed in  
a particular

career, the Virtual Guidance Counselor offers links to information about the career, what it's really like, education requirements, salary studies, and employment prospects.

Beyond that, [careersandcolleges.com](http://careersandcolleges.com) includes links to scholarship, loan, or grant sites, as well as help on choosing a college, and advice for admissions applications. It also has a section on how to cope once they're in college and an interactive bulletin board with advice, suggestions, stories, and more.

And this is just one site.

"We do research with readers (of Careers & Colleges) and guidance coun-



selors, and they all say they're all using the internet for research," Karlitz says. "Some schools have even been distributing lists of sites for students to look at."

### See Also

If you're thinking about choosing, applying for, and paying for college, you're not alone, and there's no reason you should be alone in your search. The Internet holds a wealth of information (as you well know!).

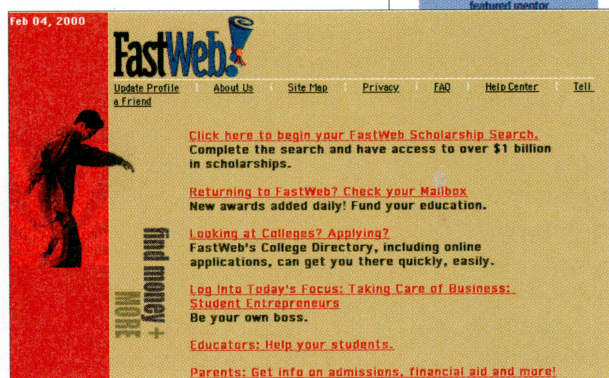
Start with [careersand-colleges.com](http://careersand-colleges.com), but you don't have to end there. The site itself has some incredibly valuable links you'll want to consider: the Department of Education Website, which contains a Student Guide for information about financial aid ([www.ed.gov/](http://www.ed.gov/)), or Embark ([www.embark.com](http://www.embark.com)), which lets you search for scholarships, has advice for studying for tests, and even helps your kid pick a well-suited college.

Don't ignore those military sites, either. Nearly every branch of the U.S. military has some kind of education incentive, and some of them are pretty phenomenal. The Air Force, for example, offers scholarships specifically to those planning to go into health professions ([www.airforce.com](http://www.airforce.com)). Consider public service, too. If your kids aren't ready to go straight to school, or if they want to build up money to pay for it without having to take out loans, there are programs like AmeriCorps, a sort of domestic Peace Corps, that let them do meaningful work in exchange for money for college ([www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org)).

Several sites, like Embark, focus specifically on how to help your children choose a school and apply successfully. One is [www.MyRoad.com](http://www.MyRoad.com), a member site for exploring careers and colleges, complete with anecdotes, advice, and even mentor services. There's also the College Board ([www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)), where you can get practical information about test dates, register to take the SAT, find out about admission and enrollment as well as the all-important financial aid info, and more. Don't give up — the information is out there, and it's not hard to find.

These sites offer the kind of practical information designed to ease the fears of both parents and students, Karlitz says.

"The biggest thing we hear from our college kids is that they're really looking forward to the freedom and getting away from



their parents," she says. "Once they get there, they say the toughest thing is 'all this freedom.' Time management and money management are big problems for them."

Sites like *Careers and Colleges* and MyRoad are designed to answer the simple questions that students might not think to ask, Karlitz says.

"The questions that I get from the kids right before they go to college are: how do I make friends, and what should I bring? Do I need a TV, my dress-up clothes, my not dress-up clothes," she says. To this end, the *Careers & Colleges Website*, for example, features a bulletin board where anxious freshmen or freshmen-to-be can post questions or concerns, and receive answers from other college students.

### The Green

"Obviously, paying for college is the biggest concern," Karlitz says. "There's \$80 billion for financial aid this year, and a lot of middle-class kids don't know they're eligible. They just take themselves out of the running and don't apply when they should."

Everyone involved in the booming industry of college-preparation Q & A

is aware of this simple truth, experts say.

"Everybody wants a list of scholarships," Karlitz says. Again, this need has created a satellite industry wherein companies sell "guides" to scholarship opportunities that Karlitz and others say may be overrated at best, and bogus at worst.

"There is nothing that they can tell you that you can't find out for free," she says. "We have a list of featured scholarships, and links to scholarship search engines, and more."

Several college help sites are devoted almost solely to financial aid, and every single one we've seen has prominent links to help you navigate the sometimes nightmarish maze. Check out [www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org), for example, for advice on all kinds of financial aid, from scholarships to loans to military opportunities, and even subscribe to a newsletter to receive constant updates. Others, like [www.FastWeb.com](http://www.FastWeb.com) and CollegeNET ([www.collegenet.com](http://www.collegenet.com)) boast free scholarship searches.

### The Children Are Our Future

Think of the Internet as a repository for shifting resources. If your kid's high school guidance counselor can't steer him or her in the right direction, the Internet can.

"When you have a three-year-old, you can buy any number of parenting magazines," Karlitz says. "When you have a student, there aren't a lot of places to go. But there should be."

And there are. Help in choosing the right college is just a mouse-click away! **NTI**



## Little Fingers

★★★★

\$99

Datadesk Technologies

www.datadesktech.com

While it may sound like a box full of dismembered digits, Little Fingers is actually a keyboard designed for the very very small. Kids can really get their hands on the Little Fingers. Its keys are tiny enough for their miniscule phalanges, and it works for both Macs and PCs. Right out of the box this little wonder will work great with your computer, as long as you've got small hands, that is. The keys are positively itty bitsy. Some kids may even find them to be too small.

But the aim of this keyboard is to appease the exceedingly young, possibly below the age of six. Each key is no larger than your pinky finger, and from a purely nerd stand point, this keyboard is about average. The keys are relatively loud and clicky (a plus for kids and nerds alike). The delete key is the right size, as is the return key, both of which tend to be easily misplaced or sized

on modern keyboards. The arrow keys,

however, are in an obnoxious place,

strange when you consider that this keyboard will probably see a lot of game playing. This coupled with the lack of a numerical

keypad make for a pretty large omission in the kids' gaming category. Finally, the trackball that takes the place of the numerical keypad is pretty much worthless. It's a last minute add-on that's as flimsy as it is inaccurate. When will people learn that mice are not to be compromised on?

Okay, so maybe this is a little too much to ask of a keyboard for kids. But how else can one review a keyboard? Your kids probably have their own keyboard pet peeves already, and if they're old enough to talk, they probably understand your computer better than you do anyway. So the Little Fingers may make their lives easier if they type a lot, but chances are your kids would be just as happy with your regular keyboard.

—Alex Handy

## Shades & JB's Essential Learning Series 3-Pack

★★★★

\$40, VTechSoft

800-742-1050

www.vtechsoft.com

Ages 3-6

PowerPC required

In our rush-rush, gotta-have-it-yesterday world, young minds may well appreciate the slow, easy pace of Shades & JB's Essential Learning. Unlike many kids' titles on store shelves these days, Essential Learning lacks Pokemon, Rugrats, and other licensed character tie-ins. While the CDs are hosted by animated characters — a chameleon called Shades and a Jitter Bug named JB — the focus is clearly on the activities.

The set includes three discs: one for letters, one for numbers, and one for colors and shapes. Each contains various activities, for which kids and parents can check and print progress

reports. To avoid discouragement, most activities include three levels of response. The first asks the child to try again, the second provides a hint, and the third try provides the correct answer.

The set is clearly designed to grow with your child. The youngest users will benefit from things like identifying letters, colors, or numbers as they are called out, while the older ones will better appreciate practicing adding and subtracting or building a toy from geometric shapes. In other words, the CDs aren't completely beneficial to a 3-year-old or to a 6-year-old, but there is a range of activities that span a breadth of skills.

Unfortunately, not every activity is well executed. In the changing words game, for example, children are asked to click on a letter that's the same color as the one in a given word. That doesn't always work — they should actually be looking for the background color of the letters, not the letters themselves. Even the artwork is sometimes confusing. When kids are asked to click on the letter that the word "zebra" starts with, they're shown a picture of a polka-dotted animal on two legs. (In the reward animation, the animal is shown unzipping a suit to reveal his stripes.) Worst of all is exiting the program, which must be done from the main menu of each disc.

Essential Learning lacks pizzazz, but that's not necessarily all bad. If your child enjoys quiet activities, this bundle provides a nice range without the usual distractions.

—Carrie Shepherd





# Lexia Reading S.O.S. and Phonics Based Reading



\$149 and \$119 (respectively), Lexia Learning Systems, Inc.

800-435-3942

[www.lexialearning.com](http://www.lexialearning.com)

Ages 5 to 8, and 9 to adult

Talk about education titles! Lexia Learning Systems introduces two CD-ROMs that function as reading teachers. Do you remember the teacher that taught you how to read? I remember mine: Ms. Di Carlo. She had a soothing voice, upswept salt-and-pepper hair, wonderful style, exaggerated handwriting, and patience. She was a person who helped to mold my future; she taught me to use one of life's fundamental tools.

Phonics Based Reading, for students five- to eight-years-old, and Reading S.O.S. (Strategies for Older Students), for students nine and older, including adults, are not traditional teachers by any means, but they serve the same purpose. Each program offers exercises presented appropriately for each age group, and strives for the same outcome: a person's increased confidence as he or she learns how to read.

## S.O.S.

If you're like me, you probably take reading for granted. For starters, reading this magazine comes as naturally as breathing, no? We readers don't think about not being able to read the newspaper in the morning, a menu at lunch, or a story to the little ones in our lives at bedtime.

According to the U.S. Department of Education's National Adult Literacy Survey of 1993 ([www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)), the most detailed survey ever available on the condition of literacy in the U.S., over 40 million adults in this nation are at Level 1 (the lowest of five levels), which means they cannot read basic signs, maps, complete simple forms, etc. — in short, they can't carry out the many small tasks required by adults in our society. I was aware of the problem, but nonetheless stunned by the statistics.

Fortunately, many organizations, including Lexia (whether or not they label themselves as such), are crusaders for the fight against illiteracy. I believe the activities in Reading S.O.S. will lead students to success, mainly because they are designed to be worked on independently. Older students who may be re-learning or learning for the first time will benefit from the one-on-one atmosphere of this program. The no-nonsense, quiet interface will keep students focused, and the voice prompt, warm, reinforcing, and unbiased, will allow students to feel

accomplished regardless of their pace.

The activities are plentiful and are designed to build on each other from level to level. Level 1 hosts, among others, "Master bdp," an exercise in distinguishing between three similar-sounding consonants. In Level 2 there's "Picture It," wherein students select from several words to complete a sentence, therefore strengthening comprehension skills. "Sea Hunt" in Level 3 has students select the correct vowel combination to complete the spelling of a dictated word. And Level 4 offers "Success," an activity that incorporates the keyboard when students are asked to fill in missing letters to complete words.

Reading S.O.S. is used in schools and homes, and will surely teach those who work with it: regardless of the reasons why they didn't read before.

Literacy Volunteers of America ([www.literacyvolunteers.com](http://www.literacyvolunteers.com)) states there is not one reason for illiteracy. The adult non-reader may have left school early, may have had a physical or emotional disability, or ineffective teachers. And the home plays a part: if parents are illiterate and unable to help the child, the cycle may continue from generation to generation.

## Phonics

As with Reading S.O.S., students will need little to no help as they use the learning activities in Phonics Based Reading. Just set them up at a computer and they're ready to go.

Level 1 includes "Consonant Castle," wherein students must click on the initial consonant of prompted three-letter words.

Correct responses result in the appearance of a castle at the bottom of the screen. Although the graphics are amateurish at best, they

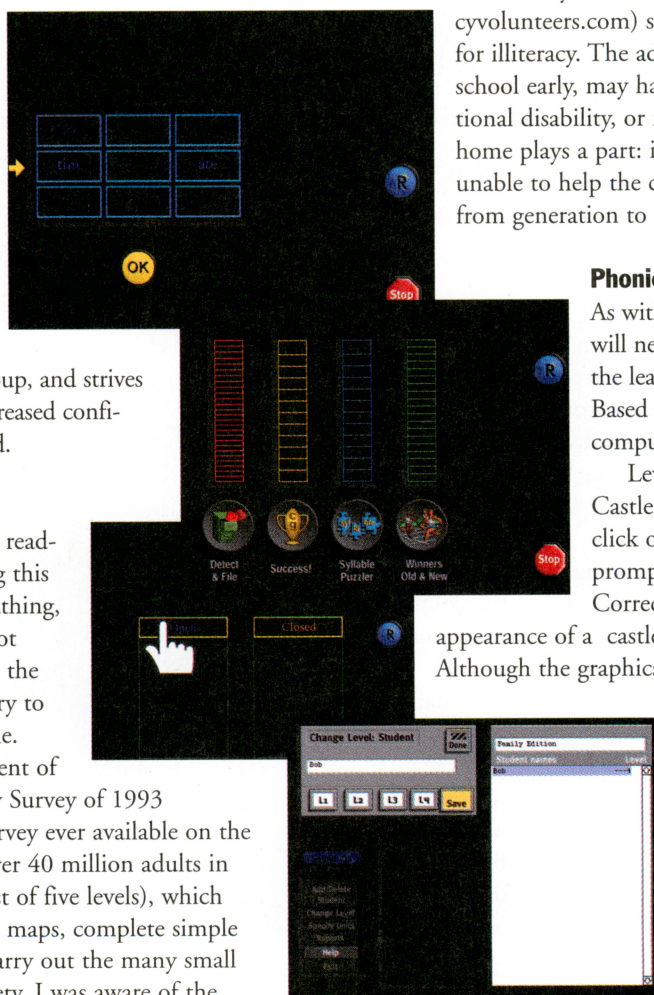
do the trick — the young ones will love the rewards of castles, balloons, parachuters, and the like.

Level 2 hosts "Spin It," which has students match words with pictures in both timed and untimed situations. In Level 3 there is "Super Change," a spelling exercise that has

students change letters of dictated words to create new words, like boat to float. And Level 4 has "Alpha Rocket," a word alphabetizing game.

If someone close to you needs a reading teacher, and you could afford it, get them one of these Lexia products. It's up there on the list of great gifts. I remember Ms. Di Carlo and the gift she gave to me. The recipient of Reading S.O.S. or Phonics Based Learning will one day have similar feelings for a little shiny disc.

—Carolyn Blackburn





## Soothe Your Inner Pooka

### How to Drive People Mad on April Fools' Day

**T**here was a time, back in the heady days of System 7, that any Joe off the street could play excellent practical jokes on a Mac owner. Sadly, as with real life, most practical jokes on the Mac are either outdated or simply too old to be funny any more. Such is life.

No one falls for the old plastic wrap over the toilet routine anymore, just as no one is terribly disturbed when you place a bizarre sound file or sick movie in their startup folder. What is the budding young prankster to do? Improvise!

Throughout this article we're going to be talking about all sorts of nasty things to do to people on April Fools' Day. Keep in mind that these are suggestions and we're not responsible for anyone getting hurt, losing valuable data, or limbs. We've also found a good resource for trick programs on the Web. The Aprils Fool's page at [www.streamweb.net/skov/fools.html](http://www.streamweb.net/skov/fools.html). They're pretty sneaky, and some of them are downright mean, so use your best judgment and don't put them on a system that has important info on it. Or at least back it all up first. And keep a system CD handy: If something goes wrong, boot from the CD so you can repair the damage you've done. So, we hereby wash our hands of blame for anything you do.

#### Web of Lies

It may not surprise some of you to learn that April Fools' Day is my favorite day of the year. It's a time for

all the merry jokesters and class clowns to get down with their bad selves.

Sadly, being the prankster that I am, it gets harder and harder to outdo last year's tricks each time this jolly day rolls back around.

Fortunately, the computer world offers many new opportunities to wreak havoc. But there's still the possibility of being cliché, even in the digital world, so we must find some more original pranks to pull.

The Internet is probably the best thing to happen to pranksters in a long time. You can find fun programs to put in your target's Startup Items folder, excellent resources for real world pranks, and best of all, other pranksters with whom to conspire. There are plenty of great resources on the Web that will help you make your target's life

miserable on the fateful first of April. For starters, there's [Aprilfools.com](http://Aprilfools.com). Here you can exploit the wonders of domain names to confuse and annoy your coworkers. Send them a bogus email from the Internet Decency Committee, or create a fake Web page that recalls a product they just purchased. There's a whole laundry list of fun things to do here. Unfortunately, [Aprilfools.com](http://Aprilfools.com) wasn't blessed with terri-

bly accomplished writers, so your pranks may not be very effective. But it's free, and the Web pages and e-mails look kinda official.

If you're not so inclined to use a canned prank, perhaps you'd prefer to create your own Web page for a prank. Just pick any of the 100s of free Websites

hosting systems out there: [geocities.com](http://geocities.com), [angelfire.com](http://angelfire.com), [schoolsucks.com](http://schoolsucks.com), or any of the others you may know. Just open up an account and create a page about your target. Remember Mahir, the Turkish stud with the "I kiss you!" Web page ([http://members.xoom.com/\\_XOOM/primall/mahir/index.html](http://members.xoom.com/_XOOM/primall/mahir/index.html)) Why not make a parody site about your friend in the same spirit? Put up some of their family photos and





write your own bizarre captions in broken English. Or go Photoshop crazy and stick your target's head on the body of an orangutan or even worse, Rush Limbaugh (Ed: *MacHome* does not wish to imply that Rush Limbaugh is a monkey). With just a few filters and the judicious use of the smudge tool, you can produce some interesting photos of your boss. Open up an anonymous e-mail account at hot-mail.com or email.com and forward the link to your Website to all your coworkers. It's quick, it's easy, and it's completely evil.

### Hack Someone's Mac

There is definitely no room for the squeamish in the world of computer pranks. For those of you willing to go the extra mile, your Macintosh can become a battleground. At <http://www.streamweb.net/skov/fools.html>, you'll find all sorts of mean programs and extensions that are sure to drive your target screaming and babbling into the streets. First, we'll need to gain access to your target's computer. You might want to sneak into his or her office during lunch and create yourself an account in the Users & Groups folder in Control Panels. That way, you can log onto their machine over your Appletalk network without them knowing, and easily install things into their Startup Items folder or Extensions folder whenever you're feeling fanciful.

Once you've got access to their Startup Items folder, you can put in all sorts of nasty things to drive your target crazy every time he or she restarts. One of the oldest and most feared items is Shutdown, the program at the bottom of the Apple Menu in System 7.5. Technically, Shutdown is a program, and thus if it's in the Startup Items folder, it will simply shut the computer off after it's finished starting up. This is just plain mean. To get Shutdown out of the Startup Items folder, you'll need to boot up off of your System CD.

A less violent prank is placing a 60 second sound bite of pure silence in

the Startup Items folder. As you may know, when a sound is playing in the Finder you can't do anything, thus your target will have to wait a full minute after startup to continue. If you don't want to be so dubious, simply place a random silly program in the Startup Items folder. We recommend duck. Other fun things to put in there are Freeverse's Jared, Super Spam, and Melt. None of these programs do any damage; they're simply loud and annoying (and toned deaf).

If you really want to get mean, use some of the nasty extensions on the April Fool's page for pranks that'll

the trigger's Appletalk menu and write up an alert. We recommend something like "Foolish Human!" or "What are you doing, Dave?" It's a shame this won't work on a modern operating system, but it's just too good not to mention.

For the target who's using a modern version of the Mac OS (8 or higher) you can install Grouch8. This is an

**I Trick You!** There's plenty of fun stuff to do to an unsuspecting Mac user on April Fools' Day, you can even create false alert boxes.

update of the classic extension of the same name. Whenever your target empties his or her trash, that master of muck, Oscar the Grouch, comes out of the can and sings. This is a good one to install on your machine at home: The kids will love it. But make sure they don't throw away anything important just so they can see Oscar.

last more than a few minutes. Our personal favorite is Radiation. Sadly, it doesn't work under OS 8, but if your target's using System 7.5, you're in luck. Simply install the extension on the target's computer, then go into the File Sharing control panel and turn on Program Linking. Now, restart and head back to your computer. Once your target is back on his or her computer, open up the trigger program and let the fun begin. Radiation allows you to place text inside alert boxes and then open them on your target's computer. Simply select your target's computer in

Another fun extension is Minitors, a nasty bit of code that shrinks your monitor by one pixel every time you start up. This one takes weeks to notice, but the payoff is wonderful. Your target will go mad trying to figure out whether his or her monitor is really getting smaller or if he or she is just going insane. Speaking of insanity, by placing Key Lights in your target's Control Panels folder, you can make his or her keyboard lights cycle back and forth. If the sight of Caps Lock, Num Lock, and Scroll Lock flashing on and off repeatedly doesn't drive them mad, I don't know what will.



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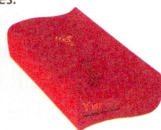
FireWire CardBus Card



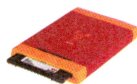
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# VST

125 Nagog Park  
Acton, MA 01720  
(978) 263-9700

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## General Chaos

But the real fun of April Fools Day is not making someone miserable, it's making normal everyday people cock their heads in confusion. Where better than the Web to cause chaos? For a long time, Internet pranksters have been placing false items on eBay and posting bogus comments to message boards. One place to insert a dab of chaos into society is on Amazon.com. In their fantabulous Books section, readers can post comments on any book they please. You probably already know about this, but what you may not know is that authors can post comments on their own books as well. So, if one were to, say, stop by the site for Rush Limbaugh's seminal work *The Way Things Ought to Be* (Ed: MacHome does not wish to imply that Rush Limbaugh is a goober), and scroll to the bottom of the page, he or she could then click on the link that says "I am the author."

Then, a person with a good imagination could concoct all sorts of inane banter on the subject of Rush's feelings about his own literature. As long as you keep the language clean, the entire world will be able to read the rather bizarre and out-of-character statements of our friend Rush on Amazon.com after five to seven days, when Amazon's staff will post the comment. Now, we don't condone this sort of action, it's not moral nor ethical. Only a very nasty and poorly groomed person would ever consider taking advantage of Amazon.com.

If you prefer your Web antics to be directed at a specific person, you could always sign one of your friends up for a matchmaking service. Be aware that this is an extremely vicious prank, as it will usually result in a torrent of dirty email from complete strangers. Just head on over to a personals Website (we'd mention one here, but all the major services, such as singles.com, have their own internal email system, so this trick wouldn't work), and sign up your target for an account. Be sure to include his or her email address and mention some, er ... risqué items under turn-ons. To ensure an overwhelming response, sign your target up as a female, even if he's male. Get your camera ready to capture

the expression on his face as he checks his email the next morning. This one is especially effective on that friend who keeps forwarding you dirty pictures (you know who they are).

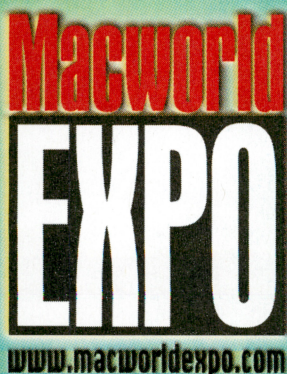
Finally, if you don't have the stomach to sign up your friend (we're presuming you can still call him or her a friend after you get through with your pranks) for some Internet lovin', perhaps you'd be better off placing them on an email list. Head onto the Web and start signing your target up for email newsletters and press releases. Almost every commercial Website distributes some sort of email newsletter, so just dig around the site for a while until you find one. He or she will be wondering why McDonald's now feels it is necessary to inform them about their newest cheeseburger. Some mailings come four or five times a day, and can really clog up an email box quickly. Alternately, every time you sign up for a Web service and are asked for an email address, put in your friend's. That way, he or she will get the spam and you'll get the services.

## The Final Paralysis

Incidentally, you're probably still wondering what on earth a Pooka is. Ever seen the movie, or play, *Harvey*? Well, Harvey, though a seemingly giant rabbit, was a Pooka. Pooka are animal spirits from Celtic mythology who appear as half human and half animal. Usually half cute animal, such as rabbit or kitten, or some-such. Pooka are notorious pranksters and have been said to spend years working on a single elaborate trick. The perfect mascot for April Fools' Day.

Whatever you choose to do to get your jollies on April Fools' Day, try not to hurt anyone. We recommend against using explosives or industrial strength adhesives in any of your pranks. It's also a good idea to be sure your target's computer is backed up the day before you go traipsing around his or her System folder installing extensions willy-nilly. Oh, and just one more thing: A Sunday edition of *The New York Times*, when disassembled and crumpled up, will easily fill a Volkswagen. **III**





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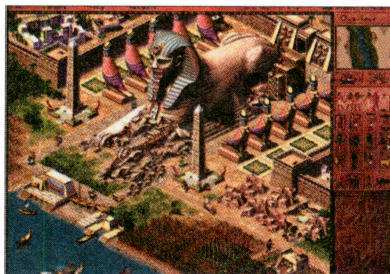
## Pharaoh Gets Buried

**T**here's a storm a-brewin'. A storm around the headquarters of Sierra. The winds and rains of the storm are fueled by bad juju and nasty karma. No, Sierra is not doing a whole lot to improve their Mac reputation. The publishing house has managed to step on Mac gamer toes once again. This time, however, the damage is a little less severe than it was with the *Halflife* cancellation.

Pharaoh was not as close to being finished as *Halflife* was, and so the cancellation of the Mac version is not as much of a death blow. For those of you that missed it, *Halflife* (easily the most critically acclaimed game of 1998) was about a month from being completed for the Mac when Sierra pulled the plug. Let's just hope that Sierra's decision on *Pharaoh* is not an indicator of their commitment to the Mac altogether. It's a shame that such a traditionally powerful developer such as Sierra (creator of such classic games as *Leisure Suit Larry* and *King's Quest*) is having so much trouble breaking into the Mac market. We feel that there's plenty of gamers out there to support Sierra's games, but

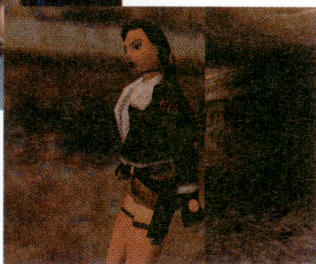
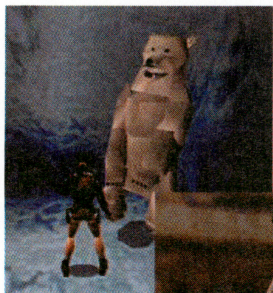
constantly canceling games after hyping them isn't helping those gamers one bit. Feel free to write to Sierra and voice your opinion on the *Pharaoh* decision. And mention *Halflife* too. However, we do not condone the use of the word "sleaze-bag."

[www.sierra.com](http://www.sierra.com)



## Heads Up!

**Connectix wins lawsuit over Virtual Game Station**, bringing hundreds of new games to the Mac! See [www.connectix.com](http://www.connectix.com) for details.



**T**omb Raider II fans rejoice! Now you can get more Lara than ever before for the low, low price of ... nothing! That's right Aspyr Media, those bad boys in Texas with the bad attitudes and the even badder hair cuts have announced that they'll be giving away extra *Tomb Raider II* levels on their Website. If you own a copy of *Tomb Raider II*, you can get yourself a free upgrade to *Tomb Raider II Gold* simply by surfing over to their website and downloading the 24 MB update. Sure, that's a lot to ask of your modem, but don't sweat it, leave the computer on downloading over night and you should be in good shape.

And it's worth it when you see these levels! They're gorgeous, and come with all sorts of new challenges and areas. I'd say this breathes some new life into Lara's aging limbs, wouldn't you?

*Tomb Raider II Gold*, Aspyr Media, 512-708-8100, [www.aspyr.com](http://www.aspyr.com)

## Soap Disk

**S**oap operas are pretty lame these days. When Steve gets possessed by demons and Cynthia is searching for her long lost Siamese twin with a wooden leg, you gotta think that the writers are struggling for new material. They could get a lot of good ideas from playing *The Sims*. Originally designed to be a house building simulation in the traditions of *SimCity*, *The Sims* is a people simulation. You start out by choosing a person, and then building a



home around them. It's kind of like raising a gerbil or ants: you don't control your person, you simply influence them. When they get old enough, they'll get jobs, meet the neighbors, get married, have kids, and then waste away into nothingness. Sniff. *The Sims* is a revolutionary title from that master of gaming revolutions Will Wright. The man responsible for creating the first *SimCity* is really turning some heads with this 3D people simulator. And the best news of all is that there's a darned good chance it'll come to the Mac. Wright has always been a Mac fan, and sales of *SimCity 3000* are encouraging enough to warrant a port of the title. Keep those fingers crossed, folks. With any luck, we won't have to go to the daytime soaps for our interpersonal intrigue any more. *The Sims*, Maxis, [www.maxis.com](http://www.maxis.com)



## Descent 3



\$50, Graphic Simulations

972-386-7575

www.graphsim.com

If there was one word that could describe Descent 3, that word would be nauseating. Now don't get me wrong, I don't mean to imply that Descent 3 is gross or full of debauchery. Quite the contrary: Descent 3 does not contain a drop of blood or gore.

Yet there is still a lot to be sick over. Image you're strapped into a space ship that can move and rotate in any direction, place that ship in some claustrophobia-inducing caves and compounds, and sprinkle in some haywire robots who get their jollies from pushing you around, and bingo! You've got motion sickness!

The freedom of movement in Descent 3 is rivaled only by that of its previous incarnations, all of which are available for the Mac, incidentally. As with most traditional Mac games, Descent 3 hasn't lost any of its luster in its newest form. Holding firm to the examples set by Warcraft II, Myth II, and Simcity 3000, Descent is a rightful heir to the praise and devotion received by its forefathers. Old school Descent fans rejoice, this is an excellent update.

All of what made the previous games great is back in an exponential way. The levels are much larger, the tunnels are 10 times more intricate, and the enemies are much more ornery. Even the ill-fated guide bot is back. I say ill-fated because it's pretty much inevitable that the poor little guy will get caught in the crossfire: I've never been able to keep him alive for more than a few minutes.

The enemies you'll face are some of the sneakiest out there. They'll hide from you, dodge your shots, and even attempt a kamikaze attack if they've been hurt badly. You'll spend a lot of time learning how to corner them; heck, just being able to hit them is an acquired skill.

Graphically, Descent 3 surpasses its previous versions by

leaps and bounds. It's one of those games that really shows off your computer's graphical talent. The lighting effects and explosions, especially, are top notch. One particularly nice touch is the use of the headlamp on your spaceship. When you venture down a dark tunnel, simply turn on the lamp and you'll illuminate a small area in front of you. As your craft moves, so does the light. Very nice.

And I haven't even begun to speak of the most glorious new addition to the Descent world: the great outdoors. Yes, for the first time in a Descent game (Freespace doesn't count) you can venture outside and see the surface. There are some issues with the outside levels, such as the invisible ceiling which all but kills the fantasy of really being in the game. But it's a forgivable offense: there has to be a limit to how high up you can go somewhere, after all.

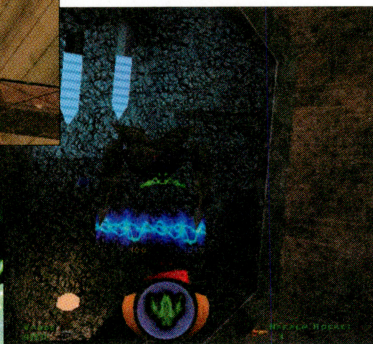
The unforgivable offenses, however, are mostly centered around bugs. We played the game on a Frankenstein-like clone (G3 card, Voodoo 3 card) and an iMac DV SE. The iMac DV SE was not pleased with Descent 3 at all. It froze during gameplay, and after a few attempts to resume gameplay, the game began to

freeze on startup all together. The recent patches for the game made Internet play a lot more stable, but did little to heal the ailing iMac DV SE.

To be fair, the iMac DV SE is not the most reliable of machines. Our clone handled Descent 3 fairly well, only crashing a few times during gameplay, about 70% less than the iMac. However, bugs are not the only problems with Descent 3. The storyline, a hallmark of previous installments in the series, is pretty much moot. It's not very original, and the voice acting in the in-game movies deserves an Oscar for "Best use of people around the office." You get the feeling that the movie director grabbed people on their lunch breaks to do the voice work.

However, the gameplay alone makes up for all of these problems. If you're willing to save early, save often, Descent 3 is one heck of a ride. There's even a tutorial to teach newcomers how to handle the complex controls required to move effectively. One note, however, you'll want a joystick to play this game, preferably one that can twist. It'll make your life a lot easier. Oh yeah, and bring an air sickness bag.

— Alex Handy





# Alpha Centauri



\$50, Aspyr Media

512-708-8100

www.aspyr.com

This was an extremely tough review to write. Not long after settling into my first game of Alpha Centauri, I was overcome with a senseless urge to rewrite my review of Civilization: Call to Power. I resisted the urge with all my might, but alas, I did return and lower the rating by a half an apple. Why, you ask? Because Civilization: Call to Power is a fun game, definitely worth playing for hours on end, but once you try Alpha Centauri, you'll begin to see that Activision simply didn't put enough care and time into C:CTP. Alpha Centauri is a perfect example of how to make a Civilization clone correctly. C:CTP is an example of how to lose sight of your goals amid a large budget and false pretenses.

Let's start with the basics. From the very beginning, Alpha Centauri understands itself. The game knows what tasks are fun and what parts of its gameplay are mindless busy work.

Therefore, you can automate a lot of the simple tasks that you would normally spend 90% of your time doing. Each of your cities can be controlled by its resident governor who can select what buildings or units to build independently of you. This cuts down on the time consuming task of queuing up units to be built in each town. This task alone accounts for around 50% of your work in C:CTP. Other things you can automate in Alpha Centauri include terraforming (that's building farms and mines), research, and movement. In the end, you really don't have to worry about the small things at all. Sure, you can handle it all by yourself at the beginning of a game, but we all know how annoying those little tasks get when you have 50 cities and a global thermonuclear war on your hands. In C:CTP, most of the gameplay involves repeating these mundane tasks: it's what Activision seems to have thought was the fun part.

But Alpha Centauri's appeal goes deeper than mindless micromanagement and dull day-to-day labor. There is much

more below the surface here than in C:CTP. For starters, the diplomacy system is light years ahead of any other game out there. You can negotiate and bargain for everything in the game. Whether you need extra cash, want your neighbor to stay off your land, or want your allies to give you some military units, you can handle it in the diplomacy screen. One of the new and interesting items in Alpha Centauri is the planetary council, which you can convene to discuss and vote on key issues. You can trade your technology and money for your neighbors votes on some of these issues, and in so doing, you can rise to power. Your allies are fiercely loyal when accommodated, and your enemies are fiercer still.

Your opponents behave like real leaders, too. In C:CTP your opponents usually only deal with you when you're at war.

Leaders in Alpha Centauri are capable of righteous acts of defiance, and will leap to the aid of those in peril. For example, right from the start of your game you can

choose to nerve staple your workers. This will keep your workers from rioting, but it is a major atrocity, as it turns them into mindless slaves. If you do this, you'll be immediately attacked and called a tyrant by your foes. And it gets even worse if you use

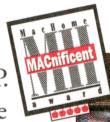
biological weapons.

Alpha Centauri is a flawless game. It's filled with the fruits of talent well spent. The in-game movies and storyline are top notch and bring a lot of extra oomph to the ideas and events of gameplay. And, oh, those voice-overs! Alpha Centauri is quite possibly the

first game I've ever played that had excellent narration and acting straight on through from beginning to end. You can really tell that Firaxis, Alpha Centauri's developer, hired some real talent and instead

of just using Joe from the mailroom. Overall, you can't get a better turn based empire-building strategy game than Alpha Centauri. It's the true heir to the Civilization throne.

— Alex Handy





## Ferazel's Wand



\$25, Ambrosia Software

800-231-1816

www.ambrosiasw.com

Ferazel's Wand is the best two dimensional platform game ever. Forget Mario, Sonic, Crash, and all the other console buffoons, Ferazel has shown them up with impunity. There's no platform game cliché that Ferazel doesn't reinterpret and make his own. All the tough puzzles and impossible jumps are here to torment you for hours on end. There are tons of levels to challenge your manual dexterity, plenty of enemies to harass you, and a whole slew of power-ups to give you that extra edge.

If you've never played a platform game before, you're in for a treat with Ferazel's Wand. Ferazel could be seen as the culmination of many generations of selective platform game inbreeding.

Platform games, such as Super Mario Brothers and Sonic the Hedgehog, have been the bread and butter of gaming consoles for

years. The games have produced some of the most memorable characters in the gaming world. Gameplay focuses on simple skills repeated and combined to

overcome obstacles. Basically, this means you'll have to learn how to jump, swim, shoot, and run and then learn how to do it all in rapid succession.

But that's where the pleasure of a platform game comes in. Players move through maze-like worlds searching for power-ups, jumping into hidden locations, and discovering new spells, all through the use of the same basic skills. It makes learning how to play incredibly simple, but it also makes for some challenging puzzles. You'll stare helplessly into your monitor trying to figure out how in the world you're going to get up to that ledge for hours before you finally see the way. In the meantime you'll have to fend off some truly cunning enemies. This is one of the few platform games out there whose enemies don't simply walk blindly towards you waiting to be killed. The spiders in particular will make you scream with terror. And the sound track, jay yi yi! I hope Ambrosia plans to release the music as MP3's because I can't get the songs out of my head. All in all, this is masterfully executed game that will appeal to every man, woman, and child who owns an iMac.

- Alex Handy

## Mixman Studio



\$80, Beatik

www.mixman.com

Mixman is that rare breed of program that manages to be simple and powerful at the same time. From the very start you and Mixman can make beautiful music together without any previous music experience or talent. Right out of the box you get a whole slew of cool sounds, loops, and vocal tracks to mix into your songs. You can also import your own tracks as AIFF files (Audio CDs are AIFF) or WAV files (The standard Windows sound file). It all makes for some delicious musical escapades on your Mac.

Mixman's interface is the definition of simplicity. The screen is uncluttered and everything can be done with the mouse or from the keyboard.

There are 16 slots for sounds and each slot can be toggled on or off from the keyboard.

Thus, you can play Mixman as though it were an instrument with the keyboard as the keys or valves.

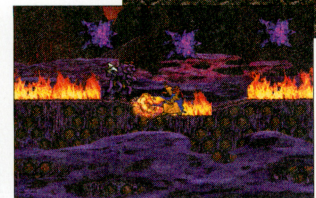
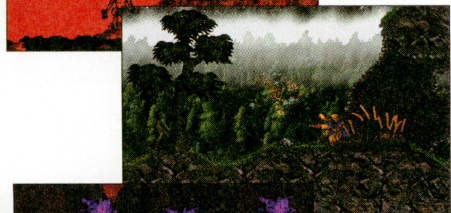
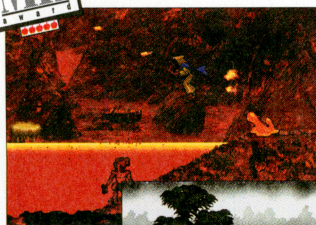
Tapping a toggle button over and over results in a stuttering start of your sound while

holding the key and hitting the lock button toggles the sound into loop mode indefinitely.

Some of the fringe benefits of Mixman are found on the Mixman website. Soon there will be a Mixman streaming radio broadcast filled with tunes made by Mixman owners (The radio station is up now, but does not yet work with the Mac). Also on the website are numerous song packs by your favorite artists. I downloaded the Soul Coughing pack which contains about 18 loops and sounds from their hit song Circles. In three hours of hard labor I hammered out one heck of a remix. When you're done making your remixes you can export your song as an MP3 or an AIFF file. Combine that with a CD-R drive and you've got everything you need to become a full-fledged recording artist.

There are some problems, however. You can't run Mixman with virtual memory, so every time you want to use it you need to restart with it turned off. Also, the sound recording and import features are a tad limp, so you'll need an outside program to trim your sound bites into the right length. Aside from these problems, however, Mixman is an amazing program.

— Alex Handy





## Real Feel Pool Shark

★★★★☆

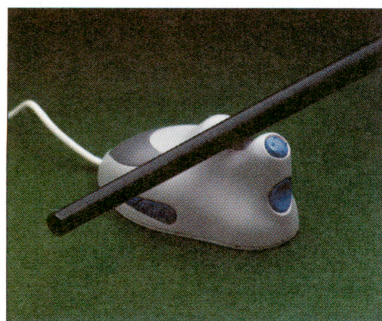
\$40, Miacomet, inc.

800-732-5333

www.miacomet.com

If you're a pool fan, you need to get yourself a Pool Shark. With this little USB mouse/game controller you'll be able to put "Fats" in your name as you skillfully pocket the eight-ball. Miacomet has a real winner on their hands with the Pool Shark. It takes a little getting used to, but once you've gotten the basics down, you won't need a real pool table anymore.

At first glance, the Pool Shark looks a bit like a mouse with some cosmetic problems. Once you get a good grip on it, however, it becomes a much more welcoming tool. The roller on the



top is for the included plastic pool cue to roll across, which is what gives the Pool Shark a distinct advantage over a mouse. The roller is a surprisingly effective way to simulate a natural cue stroke; it makes most other sports controllers seem contrived. It's refreshing to see the Pool Shark surface amidst a growing torrent of ever more elaborate joysticks and mice. The Pool Shark's simplicity is its best asset. There are no drivers required and both righties and south paws can use it. However, in order to switch between hands you need to flip a switch on the bottom of the mouse. The switch comes preset in mouse mode, and the documentation doesn't mention the need to switch it. This can cause some confusion and makes for a rough start.

Once you get the thing working however, you'll be rewarded with an incredibly solid game of pool. The Pool Shark comes with a PC game, Virtual Pool 2, a game which isn't Mac compatible, but Mac players can expect to receive MacSoft's Real Pool instead. Real Pool isn't filled with the bells and whistles of the PC game, but it's a darn good pool game, even if it is two years old. All together this is one heck of a package. For only \$40 it's a great birthday present for your iMac owning pool baron. Just don't let him or her sucker you into a steep match.

— Alex Handy

## Civilization: Call to Power

★★★★☆

\$49, MacSoft

800-229-2714

www.wizworks.com/mac

At first glance, Civilization: Call to Power seems to be more of the gloriously addictive gameplay we've come to expect. But the further you delve into the depths of a game you discover that it is no longer Civilization. It's addictive, fun, and original, but it's no longer a sequel. For the first 2000 years, the gameplay is just like the originals. But once you get into the future, things change drastically, and not for the better. The space system is a bit pointless, and a lot of the futuristic units seem to fall short of the capabilities they're intended to have (and I'm convinced the computer cheats).

And yet, the game is still surprisingly addictive. The main reason for the unstoppable addiction is the way the player is held in a constant state of suspense and anticipation. No matter how many hours you spend in front of your screen researching technological advances and building an army, you'll never get things perfect. There's always another civilization that has more military muscle, always a town that needs a new aqueduct. There's always something else you need to do. What could be more torturous to a rabid perfectionist?

Under the hood, however, there are some major problems. The interface is straight out of Windows, and was probably considered obtuse even on that messy platform. Unit movement in particular is a pain in the royal tuccus. A lot of menus and control windows are a pain to use, requiring a lot of extra mouse clicks. And the multiplayer game does not support play by email, as it did on Windows. But regular multiplayer games are fairly easy to set up and play, and you can even take on PC dorks. Just try not to get too involved in an online game: games take hours to finish, and you probably have to work tomorrow. But then again, you can always call in sick ...

— Alex Handy





## Take RAM into Your Hands

### Installing Memory Modules into Your New Slot-Loading iMac

Installing memory can be a daunting task for a novice user. Although Apple has taken great pains to simplify the process with its new iMacs, the sight of bare silicon can be terrifying to the uninitiated. This fear is unfounded. The more familiar you become with your Macintosh, the better.

New owners of slot-loading iMacs can save installation fees by following these detailed instructions.

You will need to collect several items before you begin the installation procedure: a pair of rubber-soled shoes, a soft towel, a nickel, and of course, the memory module.

First, disconnect every cable from your iMac except the power cable. Clear off a wide area of your desk adjacent to your iMac, and lay the towel across the desk. Position the iMac so that its display is turned towards the towel. Grab its handle and slowly tip it forward so that it lays face down on the soft surface of the towel. Now rotate the iMac so that its cute little bottom is towards you. You will see an oval door approximately six inches wide, topped with a small circular latch with a vertical indentation. Place the nickel in the indentation and turn the latch to the left to unlock the door. Pulling the door forward reveals a smaller oval opening that allows you to get at the memory slots. Immediately above this opening is the recessed latch area exposing a metal shield. You must now touch this grounded metal to discharge any static electricity that may be coursing through you. This is a final

guard against possible static shocks. You should also use an anti-static strap as described on page 30.

After you touch the metal shield, unplug the power cord from the iMac. Locate your memory module and remove it from its static-proof bag. Look carefully at the module and note the location of the metal teeth and notches. Now peer into the iMac. You will see two memory slots, each approximately five inches wide. One slot contains a 64MB module, while the other is empty. At either side of the empty slot, you will find a latch. Use your fingers to push these latches off to the side. Look closely in the groove of the slot and you will notice two small dividers. Align these dividers with the notches of the memory module, and slowly slide the module straight into the slot. Once it begins to sink into the groove, place one thumb at either side of the module (resting your hands on either side of the iMac), and apply a medium amount of force. You should hear a low

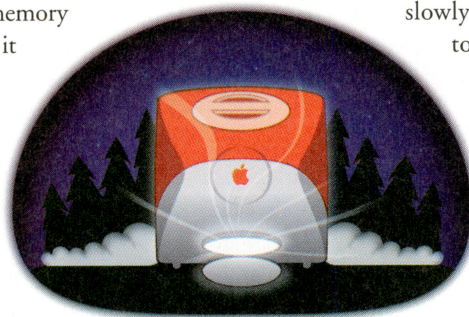
thud as the module snaps into place. You may have noticed the slot latches moving forward during this process. These latches will pop into the side notches of the memory module if it has been properly seated. If the latches are still at an angle, you must apply more pressure to the module to snap it into place.

Once the memory module is comfortably seated in the slot, you can close the iMac's rear door and lock it tight using the nickel. Rotate the iMac to the side, grab its handle and slowly tip it off the

towel and onto its feet. Connect all cables, slide it back into position and press the power button.

Once your iMac has started up, go to the Apple Menu and select "About This Computer ...". Here you'll see how much RAM you have. Make sure the RAM you installed is showing up in your total.

Don't panic if your iMac fails to start and instead plays the somber, minor-key tones that indicate a hardware failure, or if the module you installed does not appear to be working. There are two possibilities: First, your memory module may not have been seated properly in the slot. Open the iMac, remove the module and carefully reinsert it into the slot. It may take a few tries to get it in properly. **NTT**





## Let Internet Explorer Browse for You!

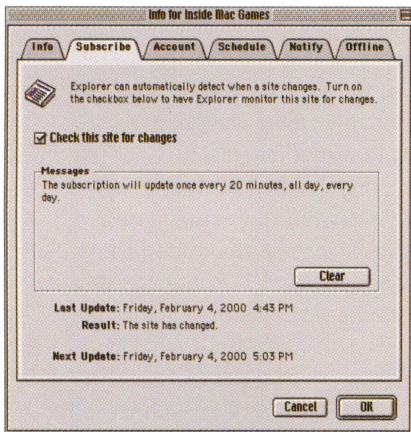
**B**rowsing the Internet can be a bit like gambling. Many of us keep revisiting a site, several times a day, in the hopes that it has been updated with new information. Eventually, of course, an update is posted and there is a payoff to our mad clicking. Wouldn't it be nice if there was some way that we could be informed each time our favorite web sites are updated? Internet Explorer 4.5/5.0 does just that with its clever subscription features.

Launch Internet Explorer and visit one of your favorite web sites. Choose

"Subscribe..." from the "Favorites" menu and then click "Customize" in the alert box that appears. A window appears listing several options for your new favorite. Edit the name and address of the website if need be. Click on the "Subscribe" tab at the top of the window, and make sure that the option to "Check this site for changes" is checked. Next, click on the "Schedule" tab to specify the how frequently Internet Explorer will poll the web site for changes. Check the option to "Use a custom schedule for this site" if you'd prefer to check it more than once a day. Rabid net surfers might want to have Internet Explorer

check the site every 30 minutes. Now click on the link marked "Notify," check the option to "Use a custom notification for this site" and specify how you want to be informed that the site has been updated. Once you're done, click "Okay" to return to regular browsing.

Internet Explorer will now make regular, behind-the-scenes visits to the sites you have subscribed to check for recent updates. As soon as it discovers any changes, it will notify you. If you click on the "Favorites" tab at the left and drag the sites into the "Toolbar Favorites" folder, the sites will be listed under the address toolbar. You'll see a blue star appear next to the site name whenever a change is detected. The more adventurous of you might want to add custom sounds to your system to help identify which web site has been updated. Quit Internet Explorer, open the Sound control panel, and click on "Alert Sounds." Click the "Add" button at the right and record a statement such as "MacHome has been updated." Give your sound a name and save it, and continue to create as many new sounds as you like. Remember to reselect your preferred alert sound before you close the Sound control panel. Relaunch Internet Explorer, and click on the "Favorites" tab at the left. Once the drawer has slid open, you'll need to locate a site you have subscribed to. Click on it, holding down the mouse button until a contextual menu pops up. Select "Get Info," and click on the tab marked "Notify." Now choose your newly created sound from the "Play a sound" pop-up menu. Click "Okay," and return to regular browsing. The next time that Internet Explorer detects the site is updated, it will be announced in your own voice!



## Whither the Launcher?

**A**lthough the Launcher has been a mainstay of the Mac OS for quite some time, few people make good use of it. One of the reasons many shy away from the Launcher is that it is not automatically opened at start-up. People quickly tire of selecting the Launcher from the Control Panels subfolder of the Apple menu in order to get things off the ground. It's a shame, too, since the Launcher provides a perfect, one-click launch pad for children and other novice users. Thankfully, there's a very easy way to have the Launcher opened at startup. Simply open the General Controls control panel, and in the top-left box marked "Desktop", check off the option to "Show Launcher at system startup."

## share your tips!

Got some tips you'd like to share with your fellow *MacHome* readers? Please send them to us at:

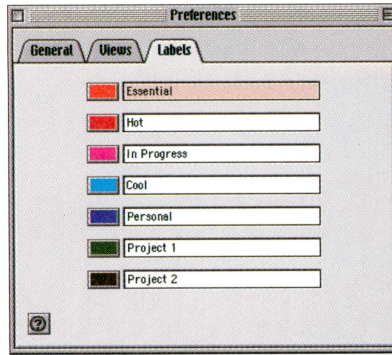
chris @ machome.com

All mail is assumed intended for publication, and we reserve the right to edit tips for brevity and clarity. When sending your tips, please make sure to include your full name.



# Accessing Folder Labels

**A** favorite feature of the Mac OS of yesteryear was the ability to assign folders and files a color. Mac OS 8 abolished the Finder's "Label" menu, however, leaving many users somewhat bewildered. Labels still exist in Mac OS 8.6 and 9.0, but the feature is somewhat hidden from the user. Locate a folder you'd like to color, and then hold down the control key while you click once on the folder icon. This will bring up a contextual menu. Look down the list of options, and sure enough, you'll see the word "Labels." Simply select a color from the Labels submenu to transform your folder. But what about the old Labels control panel, where you could change your label colors and names? It's moved to the Edit menu, under Preferences. Simply select the Labels tab and you can do all the fun customizations you used to do in the Labels control panel. Click on a color and you can pick another to replace it. Just choose a nifty new shade out of the color picker window that pops up. Want to change the name? Just edit the text next to the color of your choice. We must admit, it's a little lame of Apple to have left the default names of the labels the same for so many years. When was the last time you wanted to categorize anything as Cool, Hot, or even Project 1? Gosh darnit, get in there and change those names!



# Put browsing on hold with Internet Explorer 5

**M**icrosoft's Internet Explorer 5 includes a handy new feature called the Internet Scrapbook that allows you to store any web page you like for later viewing. Let's say you're running late for work but you'd really like to read several articles on CNN.com about insider trading before you get to the office. No problem. Open your iBook (or PowerBook), launch Internet Explorer 5 and locate the articles online. Once the article has loaded into the browser window, click the "Scrapbook" tab at the left. A drawer slides open, with buttons to "Add," "Delete" and "Organize" scrapbook files. Click "Add," and Internet Explorer 5 will automatically take the page and store it on the hard drive. (You can also choose "Customize Toolbars..." under the view menu to add a scrapbook button to the navigational tool bar.) Once you've collected all the articles, fold the iBook, pop it into its carry case and head for the bus. After you've found a comfy seat, you can open your iBook and launch Internet Explorer. Click on the "Scrapbook" tab once again, and click on the items listed to read the article of your choice. Since the web page has been stored on the hard drive, there's no need to connect to the Internet.



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## iMac Design Flaws, Ancient History, and RAM, RAM, RAM

**Q** Considering that the Mac system is based on the concept of simplicity, there's one characteristic that makes my teeth itch. Rumor has it that it's important to shut down all open applications before turning the machine off. This is pretty tedious — it's generally late and past my bedtime anyway — and it seems there should be a built-in procedure whereby the system would handle this annoying little task for me. After all, it is a Mac. Am I missing something?

Steve Patton

**A** There is absolutely no need to quit each application before shutting down your Macintosh. The only requirement is that you properly initiate a shut-down by selecting Shut Down from the Special menu, or by pressing the power button and clicking Shut Down. The operating system then automatically quits any open applications and disconnects from the Internet and local networks before it powers itself off. The only thing that may trip up the procedure is an application that contains unsaved files. In such cases, the shut-down procedure will stall while you are presented with the option to save your open documents.

It's important that you do not simply flick the power off or pull the plug, however. Although this shuts off the system in a hurry, it does not give the system the opportunity to prepare itself for deactivation. Pulling out the plug is akin

to passing out while standing up rather than climbing into bed and curling up under the covers.

**Q** A technician told me that you cannot boot from a USB device. I tried booting from a USB Zip drive and sure enough, it defaulted back to the internal drive. If I need to boot from something other than the internal hard drive, am I limited to the CD drive in the case of an iMac?

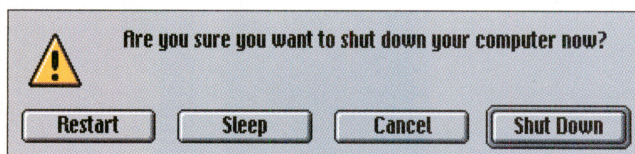
Mike Zimmerman

**A** Unfortunately, there are only two ways to start up an original iMac: from the internal hard drive and from the CD drive. This is generally not an issue for most iMac users, unless both the hard drive and CD drive have suffered simultaneous failures. You can partition the internal hard drive, however, dividing it into two or more volumes. This will allow you to install different versions of the operating system on each drive in the event, for example, that you want to use

Locate and open the Utilities folder and launch the Drive Setup application.

Once the Drive Setup window appears, click on the name of your hard drive, and then click Initialize. A new window will open, with a Custom Setup option listed in the bottom left. Clicking that button opens yet another window, where you can create partitions. For this example, select "2 partitions" from the partitioning scheme pop-up menu. In the bottom left corner of the window you'll see a rectangle sectioned in two. You can drag the boxes within the rectangle up and down to change the size of each partition. (Make sure to drag the lower box to the bottom; otherwise, a third box marked Extra may appear. This will be wasted space.) The Volume Info to the right provides more detailed partitioning options, such as the type of format (be sure to choose Mac OS Extended). Once you're happy with your selections, click OK. You now return to the second window, where you must click Initialize.

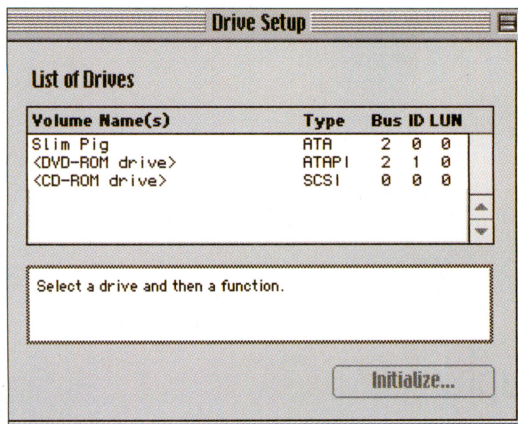
**WARNING:** This will erase all the data on your hard drive. As mentioned above, you must back up your data before initializing your hard drive. Initialization can take a few minutes. As soon as it's complete, quit Drive Setup and rename the hard drives (currently "untitled 1" and "untitled 2") to something of your choice. Launch the Mac OS Installer and place a fresh copy of the system software on one of your partitions. Once the software is installed and you've rebooted, you can pop another version of the operating system in the CD drive and install it onto the other partition. Copy your



Mac OS 9 as your main operating system but keep Mac OS 8.6 handy in case of compatibility issues. It's a rather time-consuming process, however.

The first step is to back up all your valuable data to Zip disks. Once that's done, you'll need to boot the computer with the iMac Software Install CD.





backed-up data to your hard drive from the Zip disks as soon as you're ready. Now you need only open the Startup Disk control panel and select the partition of your choice to boot up with an alternate version of the Mac OS.

**Q** I've had my iMac for almost a year, and for the past several months, the power button refuses to go dark when I shut down the computer. I have very carefully followed directions for shut-down, I've run Disk Doctor, and I've rebuilt to desktop, all to no avail. The shutdown seems complete except the power button remains green. I cannot start up the computer by pressing the power button or by using a paperclip to reset the system. Therefore, I spend a lot of time unplugging and replugging the power cable. Can you help me?

*Evangeline Keller*

**A** The problem you describe is a known issue with the original iMac series. Unfortunately, there's no easy fix. The iMac's analog board — the part of the computer that regulates the power — has a hardware flaw, and must be replaced. You'll need to lug the iMac to an authorized Apple service provider and have a technician make a definitive diagnosis.

**Q** Is there a market for a Mac SE, or should I donate it? Where can I learn the current value of the computer?

*S. Rivas*

**A** It's been fifteen years since the Macintosh SE was introduced, and it's more a curiosity now than a useful

tool. Quick checks of auctions at eBay.com reveal an average sale price of \$25 for the antiquated computer. Sadly, technology just doesn't age well. I'd suggest you keep the computer for yourself as an antique — and a reminder of just how far computing has come since 1986.

**Q** I have an iBook running Mac OS 9 with 64MB of RAM. The Mac OS seems to take an incredible amount of RAM — anywhere from 30 to 40MB — and, consequently, I cannot use any other applications when I'm using AOL. I tried using the Extensions Manager to turn off extensions I don't think I need, but it doesn't seem to help. How can I get the Mac OS to take up less RAM?

*Bob Holbrook*

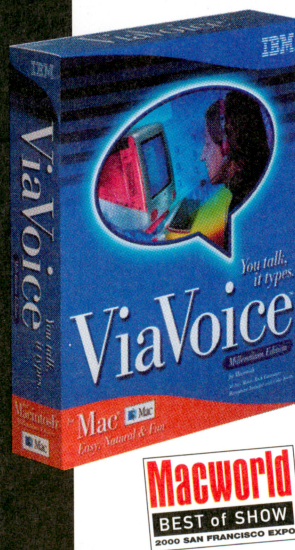
**A** Mac OS 9 demands a lot of RAM, and unfortunately, there is little you can do to shrink the amount below 30MB. Although you cannot free up

additional RAM, however, you can use the remaining RAM a little more wisely with virtual memory.

Virtual Memory is a technology built into the Mac OS that allows your computer to treat a portion of hard drive as usable RAM. When installed, Mac OS 9 automatically assigns the computer 1MB of virtual memory. To really take full advantage of the technology and give yourself some breathing space, you'll need to increase the amount of virtual memory. Open the Memory control panel, and make sure Virtual Memory is turned on. Bump up your RAM to 96MB. You must restart your Macintosh for the changes to take effect.

When the Mac OS detects that you're running low on memory, it will write the currently inactive portions of RAM to the hard drive. This frees space in real RAM, allowing you to open additional applications. When you switch back to an inactive application, the Mac OS simply writes other inactive portions of RAM to the hard drive and reloads the application's RAM contents. **MM**

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## Digital Cameras

### The Fascinating Facets of Filmless Photography

A traditional camera captures images with photosensitive film. The film, sectioned into frames, is pulled from its protective casing and lined up perfectly behind the camera shutter. The shutter swings open when the camera's action button is pressed, allowing light to enter the dark chamber for a fraction of a second.

Rays of light reflected from objects in front of the camera strike the film frame. A chemical reaction occurs in the film, registering the opposite value of each point of light and creating an inverted, negative representation of the objects in front of the camera.

Digital cameras work very similarly to traditional cameras, with one important exception: the film is replaced with a reusable semiconductor known as a charged-coupled device (CCD). In most digital cameras, the CCD consists of a tiny grid containing millions of photosensitive elements. Overlaying the grid is a patterned filter that allows each element to see only one primary color — red, green, or blue.

Pressing the digital camera's action button swings open its shutter for a fraction of a second. When the camera's shutter is open, rays of light reflected from objects in front of the camera strike the CCD. Each photosensitive element registers a specific intensity of light as an electrical charge. The electrical charges are then passed to an analog-to-digital converter that transforms them into digital data.

To determine the actual color value of any one pixel, the camera's software makes a calculated guess based on the

values registered by three neighboring photosensitive elements. The true color value of a red-filtered pixel is actually determined by the value of its green and blue neighbors.

Once the color values of the image have been calculated, they must be stored for later retrieval. A 1024 x 768 full-color image is typically 3MB in size. Conventional wisdom suggests you'd need 72MB of storage space to save 24 images. Most modern digital cameras ship with just 8MB of removable storage, however, employing the JPEG (Joint Photographic Experts Group) compression protocol to squeeze an image to one-tenth its original size. The picture remains in the storage card until it is ready to be retrieved via a serial connection or memory card reader.

#### Keeping Up With the Jones'

Modern digital cameras are finally approaching the image detail levels of traditional film. Often referred to as

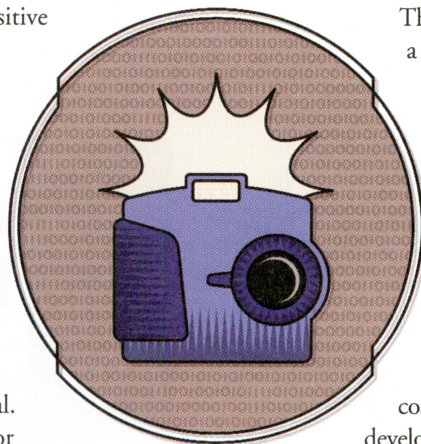
"megapixel" cameras, the devices offer resolutions up to 2400 x 1800. Still, because of the way digital cameras base the color of a single pixel on its two neighbors, the real resolution of the image remains below traditional film. Nevertheless, images from these cameras are of such high quality that mainstream newspapers are adopting them in droves to increase their efficiency.

The technology comes at a cost, however. High-end digital cameras sell for approximately \$800 - \$1000 — a jarring figure, considering that a low-end 35mm camera offering similar image detail sells for \$50 - \$100. Still, the costs of film and photo developing add up over

time. For camera buffs, an expensive digital camera is an investment that will pay for itself in the long run.

#### We Don't Have the Power, Cptain.

Unfortunately, many new owners soon come to realize their cameras are very hard on batteries. Most digital cameras include a color display at the rear that serves as a big viewfinder and allows the user to review images that have been taken. It takes a significant amount of energy to power the fluorescent tube in the display, and this can quickly drain the batteries. Thankfully, some new cameras ship with rechargeable batteries, making it less of a drain on the wallet. **MM**





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● #56405 Blueberry ● #56403 Strawberry ● #56402 Tangerine ● #56401 Grape

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Includes:

- 64MB RAM, 6GB Hard Drive,
- 24X CD-ROM Drive,
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**F**or those who want a little more, there's the iMac DV Special Edition. It includes all the great features of the iMac DV models and it comes in a unique graphite color. Plus, it has twice the standard RAM and a larger hard drive than the iMac DV models.

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#### All models include:

- 1MB backside level 2 cache ■ 2 USB ports ■ Mac OS 9
- PowerPC G4 Processor w/Velocity Engine advanced vector processing technology ■ 2 or 3 Built-in FireWire ports
- ATI RAGE 128 graphics card with 16MB of graphics memory



| Order#     | #56382  | #56384  | #56385  |
|------------|---------|---------|---------|
| MHz        | 350MHz  | 400MHz  | 450MHz  |
| RAM        | 64MB    | 128MB   | 256MB   |
| Hard Drive | 10GB    | 20GB    | 27GB    |
| Multimedia | DVD-ROM | DVD-ROM | DVD-ROM |
| Zip Drive  | N/A     | Yes     | Yes     |
| Modem      | 56K     | 56K     | N/A     |
| Price      | \$1,594 | \$2,494 | \$3,494 |



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- Built-in 10/100BASE-T Ethernet
- Built-in 56K modem

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- ATI RAGE Mobility graphics controller with 2X AGP for 2D/3D

- 4MB SDRAM video memory
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- 800 x 600 resolution for millions of colors
- Built-in speaker
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#### Compact size.

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- 6.6 pounds

#### Cool software.

- Mac OS
- Netscape Communicator
- AppleWorks and MORE!

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#### Outrageous performance.

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- 8MB SDRAM video memory
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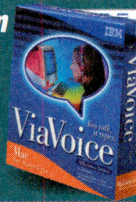
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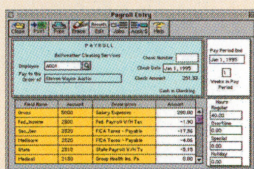
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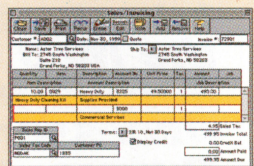


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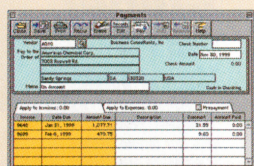
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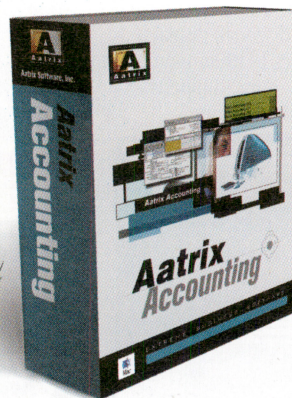


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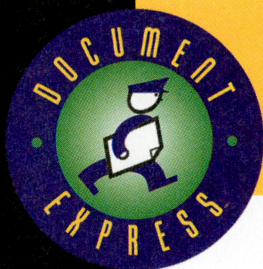


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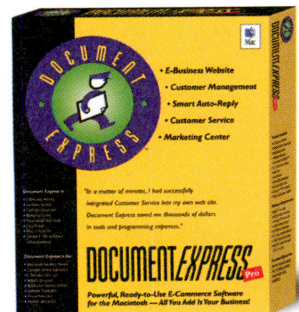
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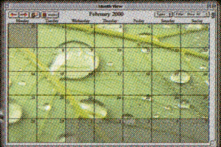
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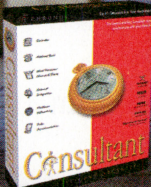
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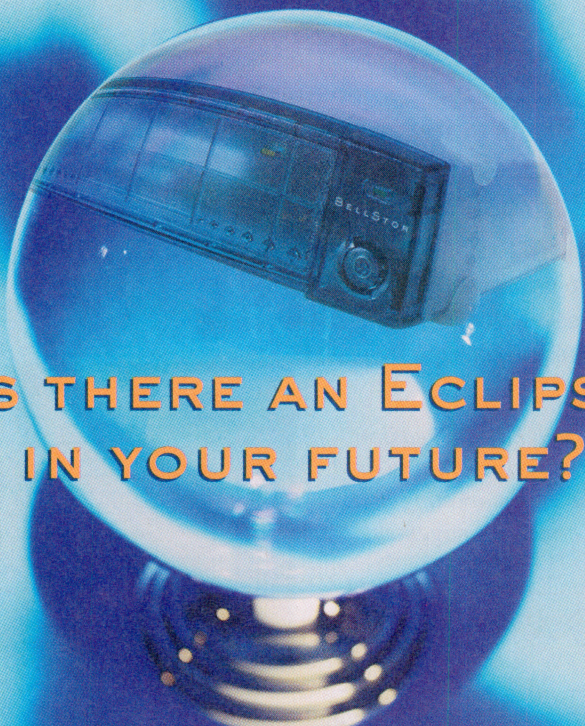
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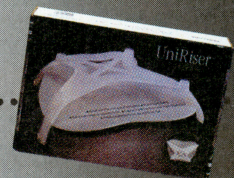


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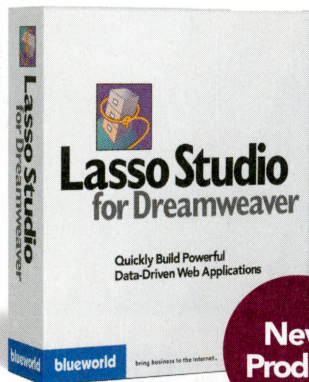
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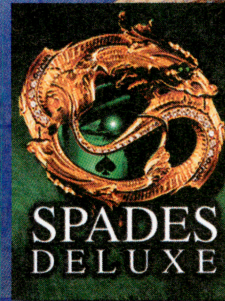
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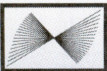
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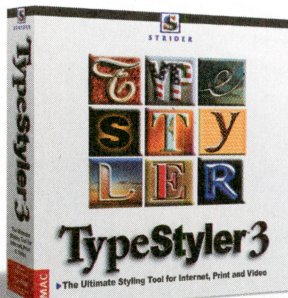
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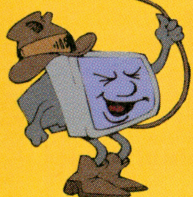
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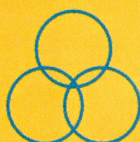
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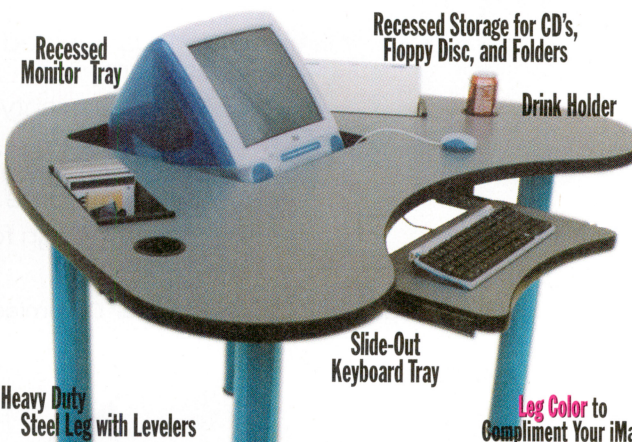


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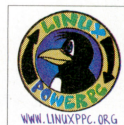
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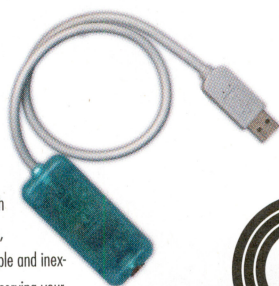
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The gPort universal serial adapter is the perfect companion for your new blue G3 computer. Designed from the ground up with the G3 in mind it supports every serial device that works on your older Macs.

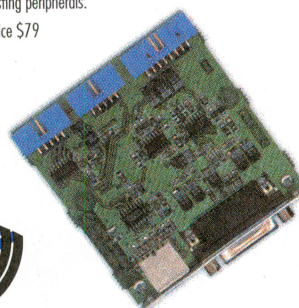
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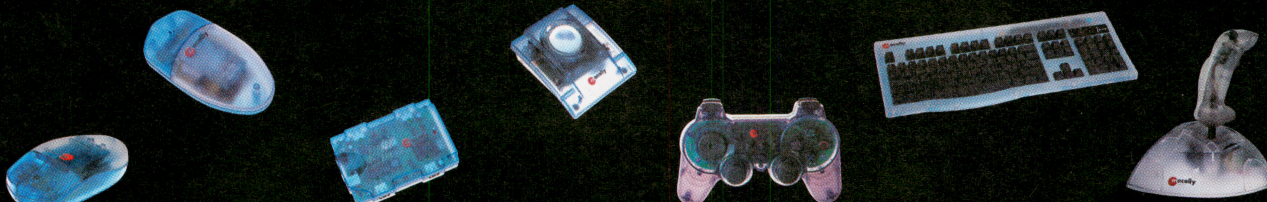
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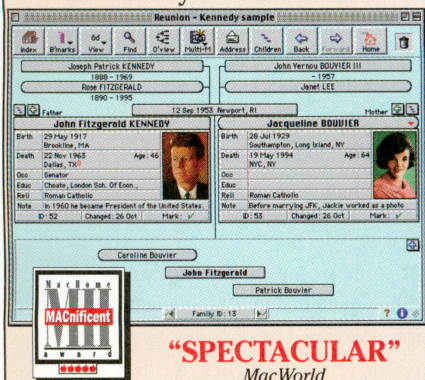
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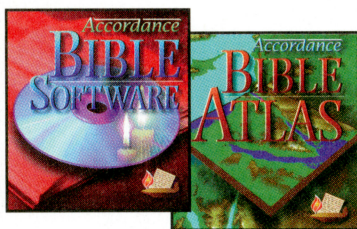
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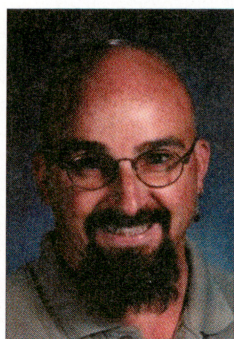
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# scienceman

[ Commentary ]  
By ScienceMan

## ScienceMan's Cool Web Favorites

**F**or us cheapos who hem and haw for weeks before buying a \$29 piece of software, finding a juicy bit of java, flash, or shockwave on the Web is always a thrill, like finding a Gretzky rookie card at a garage sale! Yet you'll sometimes scrounge for hours and find diddly-squat.

Being a teacher only makes this worse. Constantly being told to do "more with less" hones our "free stuff" seeking skills as sharp as Mike Tyson's teeth. This is not a bad thing! If you can find some-

thing fascinating, educational and free on the Web, why part with precious cash to get the same thing elsewhere? But how do you avoid junk before

finding a gem? Let ScienceMan do the wading for you!

The java cannon (<http://jersey.uoregon.edu/vlab/Cannon/index.html>) at the University of Oregon qualifies as a gem. It's a blast trying to adjust the angle and trajectory of your cannon in order to hit the target. If you're a sucker for punishment, you'll tinker with the settings for wind, drag, density and gravity. Turn those speakers up!

Physics 2000 at the University of Colorado has gallons of tasty java. My favorite is the fluoroscope ([www.Colorado.EDU/physics/2000/xray/index.html](http://www.Colorado.EDU/physics/2000/xray/index.html)) which lets you drag an x-ray machine over a hand to see the bones. Click the table of contents at the bottom of the page for more cool applets.

Dennis Kunkel's Microscopy is an amazing site that gives you the chance to operate a virtual scanning electron microscope. Start by heading to [www.pbrc.hawaii.edu/kunkel](http://www.pbrc.hawaii.edu/kunkel) and clicking on The JavaScript SEM. Get ready to experience the sounds of machinery and the sights of fantastic imagery as you learn how to use a powerful scientific instrument.

Want to be blown away? Go to NASA's Hurricanes site (<http://observe.ivv.nasa.gov/nasa/earth/hurricane/intro.html>) and take the complete tour. Along with accurate information, the site is loaded with hurricane animations that are bound to impress weather freaks. Get the shockwave plug-in at ([www.macromedia.com/shockwave/download](http://www.macromedia.com/shockwave/download)).

For some stomach-turning, mind-bending fun, head over to [www.illusion-works.com](http://www.illusion-works.com). This site is home to an incredible array of sensory illusions that will have you squinting and angling your head as you try to figure out what's going on! What's great about IllusionWorks is that every illusion is explained with a comprehensive discussion of its optical and sensory principles that explain the illusion.

The Virtual Physics Lab ([www.world-merge.com/physics](http://www.world-merge.com/physics)) has about 50 java applets to keep you experimenting for hours. Try the reaction/time applet. How fast can you drive your car on the highway and still stop in time?

Ever wonder where chocolate comes from or how it's made? Try out this interactive page on chocolate ([www.exploratorium.edu/chocolate/index.html](http://www.exploratorium.edu/chocolate/index.html)). It has sweet and creamy coverage of just about anything you'd like to know about this tasty treat. For dessert (you need dessert after chocolate?) check out some of the other great animation and movie-filled pages at The Exploratorium ([www.exploratorium.edu](http://www.exploratorium.edu)).

If you must find out what the atomic radius of a mercury atom is, head to Chemicool ([www.chemicool.com](http://www.chemicool.com)) or Gollog's (<http://home.ivm.de/~gollog/tableuk.htm>) periodic table. They both do a slick job of presenting the elements.

Before you herniate your fingers typing in all the weird URLs on this page, you should know that the good old ScienceMan ([www.scienceman.com](http://www.scienceman.com)), has put them all together for you in one place, plus he's added a whole bunch more! Enjoy immersing yourself in the fascinating science corners of the Web! 

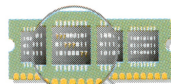
**Dear readers: starting with ScienceMan this month, we're rotating the back page among several authors. Don't worry about Andy Ihnatko — he'll be back in a few issues.**



# The Seven Deadly Macintosh Sins:



Software Conflicts



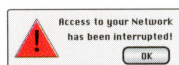
Memory Problems



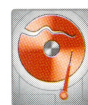
Viruses



Hardware Problems



Network Problems



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Damaged Software

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TechTool Pro can also help you in between times of trouble. Our disk and directory optimize features can help

improve the performance of your Macintosh as well as help circumvent problems before they happen. The TechTool Protection control panel will regularly check your system so you don't have to. It will also back up critical directory data, so if something goes wrong, you'll be up and running in no time flat.

But just because TechTool Pro is the most advanced Macintosh troubleshooting utility available doesn't mean that it has to be difficult to use. Our easy-to-use interface makes checking and fixing your Macintosh as easy as pressing one button. For advanced users, expert access allows you to control and configure TechTool Pro in almost any way you wish.

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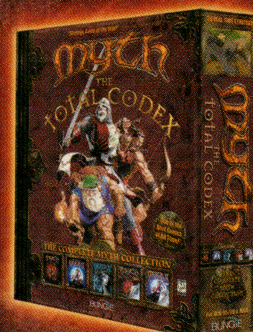
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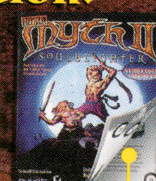
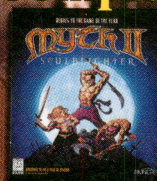
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